FERRETS & CATS - GETTING THEM TO GET ALONG

Modern FERRET™

THE FERRET LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

For ferret owners. By ferret owners.™

#7

FERRET VIDEOS • FUNNY TRICKS
HUNTING WITH FERRETS
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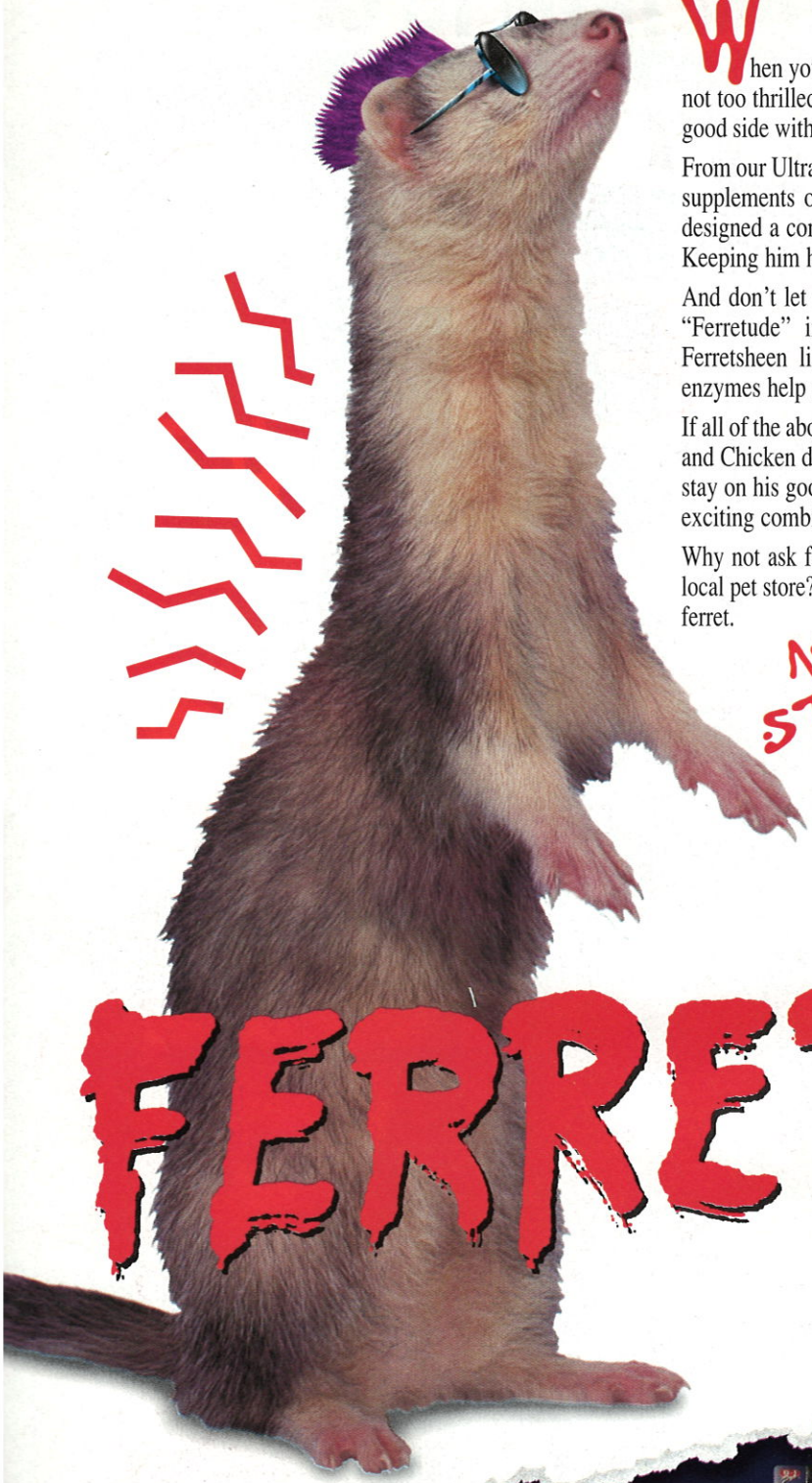

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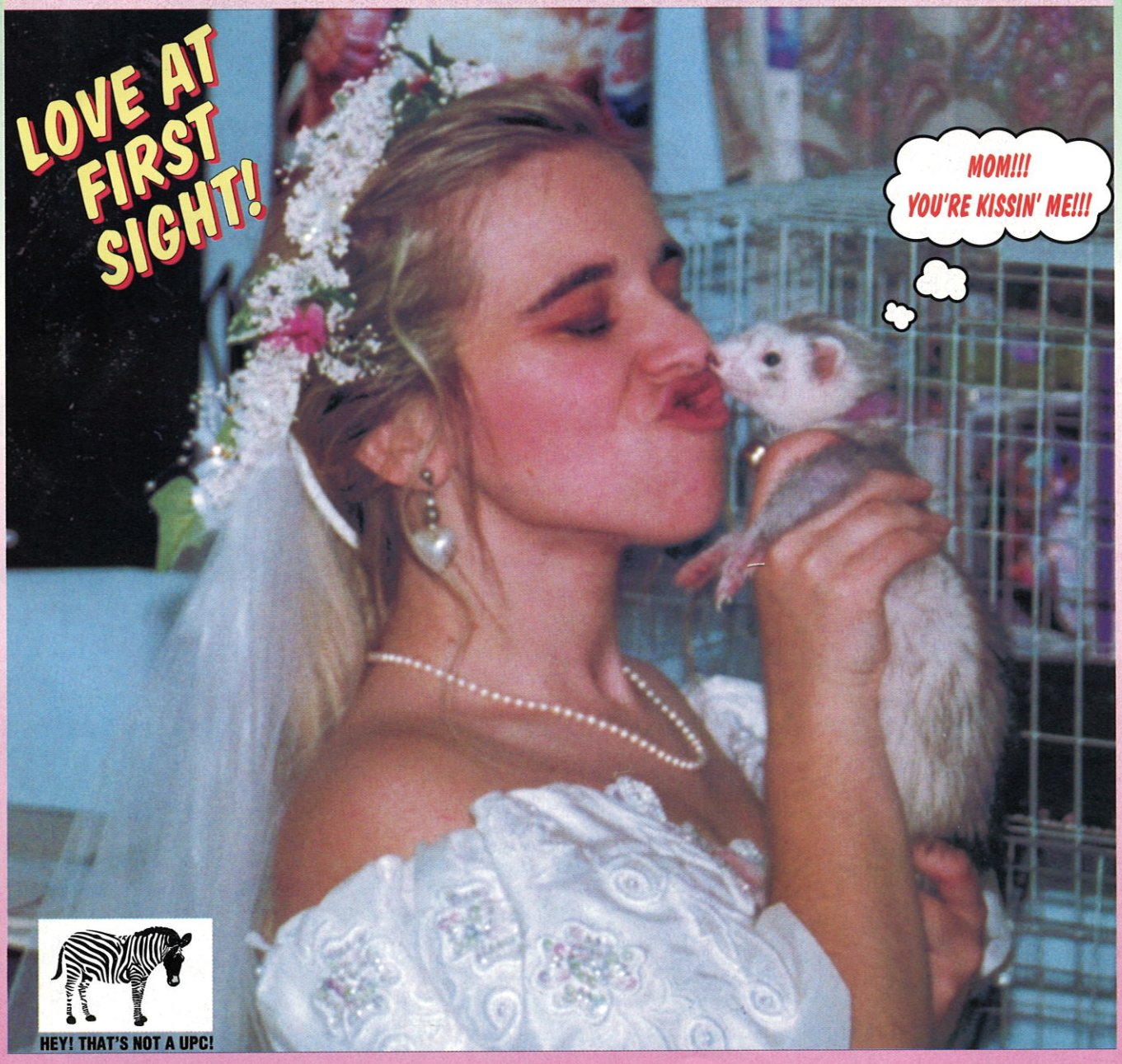
FERRETS & IN-LAWS - GETTING THEM TO GET ALONG

Bridal FERRET™

THE FERRET LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

#7

For ferret lovers. By ferret lovers.™



HEY! THAT'S NOT A UPC!

SEE PAGE 49 FOR DETAILS!

Printed in Canada

Minding Your Own Business™

MARY AND KNUKS

The Modern Staff:

Mary Shefferman - Editor-in-Chief
Eric Shefferman - Designer
- being fuzzy -
Sabrina
Ralph
Marshmallow
Knuks
Rest in peace... Barnaby
- also helping -
Dr. Bruce Williams - Medical Editor
Ted Schiffman - Photography Editor

Modern Ferret, The Ferret Lifestyle Magazine, Frank 'n' Fritter, Wally Weasel, Ferretted Fairy-Tails, Minding Your Own Business, Doctor to Doctor, The Doctor Is In, Wide World of Ferrets, For ferret owners. By ferret owners., The Ferret Directory, The Ferret Trading Post, and Pink Noses are trademarks of Crunchy Concepts Inc. Other trademarks referenced herein are used in an editorial fashion only to the benefit of the owner, no infringement is intended.

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Advertisments for companies, products, and live animals are accepted in good faith. *Modern Ferret* assumes all advertisers are on the up-and-up and we cannot accept responsibility for the claims or actions of any advertiser. As any Brady Bunch fan knows, caveat emptor (let the buyer beware).

All offers/contests are void where prohibited, taxed, or otherwise frowned upon by the powers that be.

FRONT COVER:
Linda and Russ Markert's intrepid ferret — Harley's Phil

In Praise of Whiskers

I've recently become intrigued by the dexterity with which ferrets can move their whiskers. I love to watch the twitching and stretching. The other day I was watching Ralph's whiskers. He has some wonderful whiskers: long and sturdy, yet soft. Of course, I enjoy all of our ferrets' whiskers: Sabrina's are cocoa brown and very soft; Marshmallow's sometimes seem to blend in with his white fur; and Knuks's are particularly petite and delicate. But Ralph's whiskers are just a bit different. First off, they're white so they stand out against the dark patches on his face. And second, did I say they're long?

Each of our ferrets has a distinct way of using his or her whiskers. For example, when Ralph's lapping up Ferretone, he pulls his whiskers in tight next to his face to avoid getting the oil on them. Afterwards, he wipes his face (whiskers especially) on the carpet or my sleeve or pants leg — whatever's handy. Sabrina freaks out when her whiskers get wet, and she shakes her head so hard that she nearly knocks herself over. Marshmallow uses his whiskers in combination with his forever damp nose by applying them to my bare ankle just to get a good screech out of me (never fails, I leap every time). Knuks is another one who uses her whiskers for tickling. She seems to prefer to hold her whiskers straight out so everything she approaches feels her whiskers first — and vice versa.

But back to Ralph. Ralph seems as if he *should* have whiskers, like some men just look right with a mustache. His whiskers are part of his personality, part of his "Ralphness." He simply wouldn't seem like Ralph without his long white whiskers gently brushing up against my arms when I hold him.

Ferret whiskers are marvelous. Next time you find yourself holding a ferret, why not take a long look at his (or her) whiskers? Perhaps you'll be as tickled as I am.

Applause!

I'd just like to take a moment to say congratulations to our very own Bruce Williams, D.V.M., on his promotion to Lieutenant Colonel! From Eric, Mary & all the little furry ones. Way to go!

- Mary

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The little number next to the "EXP:" is the number of the last issue of your subscription. This way you can tell when you're getting near the last issue of your subscription (horror!). The best way to ensure that you never miss an issue of *Modern Ferret* is to make sure that you renew your subscription in a timely manner.

Modern Ferret™

Vol. 2 No. 1

For ferret owners. By ferret owners.™

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Tons of nifty bowls & much more!
Where? On page 32!

Go for it! Learn a new trick,
and get a treat! Page 30!

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POP!

Pink Noses™

CUTE AS A BUTTON!

"I *heard* they grow in cans!"
Photo of Sierra and Dakota by Timothy O.

Now that's a great party hat!
Mittens is just sitting around.
Photo of Kari Hou of Alexandria VA

Nina's *really big* yawn.
Photo by Zubin Lall of Teaneck NJ

Great leapin' Louie!
Photo by Christine Whitmarsh of Tampa FL

Somebody's gettin' a hug. Hallie and Angel.
Photo by Mike and Denise Orlowski of Harleysville PA

Peanuts, Rascal, Taz, Sarge, Toby, Lucky, Simba, Nala, Cindi, Sheba, and Cubbie! There's nothing more to see here. Move along.
Photo by Paula and John Link of Milwaukee WI

"Did someone say 'fur coat'?!" Chief shouted.
Photo by Don and Cindy Fischer of Arlington TX

Keep lookin'! It smells like there's socks in there somewhere!
Boris and Giesela on the prowl.
Photo by Marie Schatz of Battle Creek MI

Carley's first-ever litter! Hey! They look like Knuks!
Photo by Debbie Scott of Ripley OH

Rod Scott and "Baby"
Photo by Debbie Scott of Ripley OH

You are being hypnotized! Give me treats!
Photo by Richard Lemke of Hartford WI

Flat ferret Taylor.
Notice the natural camouflage.
Photo by Jodi Carta of Omaha NE

How am I going to get this under the couch?
Bandit wants to play some football.
Photo by Sasha Ramsey of Lansing MI

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Hey! We're as famous as *George!*

Samir Husni has been hailed as "the planet's leading expert on new magazines" by *The Chicago Tribune*.

NOTE: While many magazines launched with naked or semi-naked *people* on the cover, only *ONE* magazine featured a ***naked ferret!***

SAMIR HUSNI'S GUIDE TO
NEW CONSUMER MAGAZINES
1996 Edition
A RECORD 838 NEW TITLES IN 1995
FOREWORD BY JOHN MACK CARTER • HEARST MAGAZINES ENTERPRISES

It's Cindy Crawford (who was already famous) on the front cover! *George* — launched by John F. Kennedy, Jr. (who was already famous) with an estimated $20 million. There are 550,000 copies of the first issue.

There's the cover of our first issue. We beat out over 800 other magazines to grab a coveted spot on the guide's cover. Featured on #1 is our little baby "Knuks" (named for her reverse-skunk markings). *Modern Ferret* — launched by two people & their love of ferrets. There are 3,000 copies of the first issue.

A big THANK YOU to our ferrets and to ferret lovers everywhere for inspiring us to work this hard!

— Mary and Eric

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From the Foreword by John Mack Carter, President, Hearst Magazines Enterprises

The Year of *George*, Martha & Those Adorable Ferrets

It was, by *George*, another milestone year for new magazines. Not only did rocketing postal rates and paper costs fail to stop the number of new titles from hitting another record high, but the most-watched start-up of the year turned out to be not just publishing as usual when John Kennedy introduced a new kind of magazine offering "not just politics as usual." Media baron Rupert Murdoch also mounted an attack on Washington, D.C., when he unfurled his conservative *Weekly Standard*.

The most successful new titles tend to be created by daring entrepreneurs with a vision.

Beyond the political category, there were lots of banner start-ups, too. *Parade* proclaimed "the largest magazine launch in history" when it introduced 4 million copies of *react*, its news and entertainment magazine for young people ages 12 to 15, into 75 newspapers. Young people in their 20s saw a shift from the kind of new magazines offered to them in 1994, from general interest titles like *Swing* and *Troika*, to publications that suddenly got down to business. The new financial magazines like *P.O.V.*, *Fast Company* and *Your Future* suggested that the young swingers were finally facing their bar tabs.

For twentysomethings still at the party, though, there were start-ups like *Speak*, "a survival guide for a generation on the brink of a new era," which was full of gritty fashions, loud-mouth music reviews and interviews with hip-hop deejays, reclusive abstract painters and drag queens who prefer to be called "performance artists." Speaking of drag queens, they got two new magazines in 1995 (*Transformation*, *Popcorn*) compared to only one the previous year, southpaws got their first ever (*Lefthander*), and hedonists could celebrate the launch of *Juice*, the unabashed "journal of eatin', drinkin' and screwin' around."

Other 1995 trends worth noting included lots of general interest publications targeted to ethnic groups: *Si, Urban* and *America Latina* for the Hispanic market; *Niko* and *Zasshi* for Japanese-Americans; and *Viktnow* for U.S. readers of Vietnamese descent. Regional magazines staged a surprising rally as they continued to become more specialized with new titles like *Alabama Teen Sports* and *New York Bar Guide*. Shelter magazines also became more focused, climbing to new heights in *Mountain Living* and heading to the beach in *Coastal Home*.

The pundits predict that very soon Americans will be spending more money on renovating existing homes than building new ones, a trend that has caused a boom in home remodeling tiles, including Time Inc.'s *This Old House* and Meredith's *Traditional Home Renovation Style*. Showing a concern for accent landscaping while also contributing to the recent huge crop of gardening titles, Meredith also introduced *Home Garden*.

Beyond the publishing behemoths, though, some of the most daring new magazines of the year were created by entrepreneurs with a vision who went after a niche — like the young Long Island, N.Y., couple, the Sheffermans, whose love of an animal that loves niches caused them to spawn *Modern Ferret*. Or consider another animal lover, the deputy features editor of the *Lafayette Journal & Courier* in Indiana who trots home every night after work to create another publication, *The Stable Companion*, filling its pages with poems, essays and short fiction expressing her and her contributors' unbridled love of horses.

Does anyone else still publish poetry? What's happened to the grand tradition of literary publishing in America? Well, 1995 revealed that it's alive

The most successful new titles tend to be created by daring entrepreneurs with a vision.

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Modern Ferret

PUBLISHED BY: Crunchy Concepts Inc.

P.O. Box 338

Massapequa Park, NY 11762

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PUBLISHER: Crunchy Concepts Inc.

EDITOR: Mary Shefferman

According to its masthead and media kit, *Modern Ferret* is published by two people — the husband-and-wife team of Eric & Mary Shefferman — and four ferrets: Sabrina, Ralph, Marshmellow & Knuks (pronounced "Nukes"). The bimonthly purports to be "the *Rolling Stone* of pet magazines" and is devoted exclusively to what its publishers maintain is the third largest companion mammal after cats and dogs.

The New York Times describes the new title as the "niche magazine about an animal that loves niches" and notes that *Modern Ferret* has "probing features, in-depth profiles and revealing centerfold shots providing the kind of worshipful attention that has long been denied the ferret by the mainstream pet media."

The twentysomething Sheffermans produce the magazine out of their Long Island home in between attempts by their furry fellow editors to run off with the computer mouse. What fuels their effort is the same affection that causes people to pay the going rate of $100 to $150 to acquire a ferret. Ownership may be considered hip these days, but it's illegal in some states like Massachusetts, California and Hawaii. The Sheffermans are out to change those state laws. Ferrets, they say, are often misclassified as wild animals when in fact they're innocent mischief makers who are cousins of the weasel and not, despite that steely look in their eyes, members of the rodent family.

"*Modern Ferret*'s goal is to help educate and entertain owners of domestic ferrets, something which is sorely needed," the Sheffermans say. "We seek to dispel many of the myths about these companion animals and to help owners, as well as veterinarians, learn more about the proper care of ferrets to improve their quality of life. This is all accomplished in the spirit of the ferret — fun-loving, playful, off-beat, and clever."

The premiere issue includes an interview with a ferret-rights' activist, photography tips from a former *National Geographic* staffer, new product reviews, nutrition pointers, veterinary medicine pieces, an events calendar and ferret fiction.

The magazine also contains photos catching ferrets at their mischief: "Mr. Bugatti" is seen toilet-papering his owner's house; Felix looks unrepentant after toppling a neat row of books; Smokey pokes his head out of an unzipped pair of blue jeans just above a caption that reads "I wish you'd use fabric softener!"

Upon seeing the first issue, a *USA Today* columnist wrote, "I love the fact that this is modern ferret. Will there be a *Traditional Ferret* magazine? *Victorian Ferret*? *Romantic Ferret Times*?"

READERSHIP PROFILE: N/A

EDITORIAL CONCEPT: *"The ferret lifestyle magazine" for the owners and lovers of those fuzzy little critters.*

We're one of the 50 Most Notable Launches of 1995!

Thanks to all the little ferrets. Treats for everyone!

Mary P. Shefferman

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BOX 338

Write to us!

E-Mail: modferret@aol.com

Modern Ferret
PO Box 338
Massapequa Park
N.Y. 11762

Letters to *Modern Ferret*

Box 338 Logo designed by Jennifer Makower

Dear Modern Ferret,

We wanted to send you a HUGE thank you for your generous donation of the copies of your latest magazine to the Ferret Association of Greater Vancouver (FAGV) to sell at The Great Canadian Pet Fair in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Thanks to your generosity, we made $50.00 from the sale of these magazines, all of which will go toward needy ferrets and getting FAGV up and running!!

The remaining magazines are going to be donated to various pet stores and pet supply stores that deal in ferrets and will be handed out to ferret owners. We hope that this will not only make more people aware of our organization, but will also encourage Canadian ferret owners to subscribe to your wonderful publication!!

We never miss an issue of *Modern Ferret* and we are so happy that there are people like Mary and Eric out there who are willing to support other ferret organizations. We could simply never thank you enough! Thank you *Modern Ferret*, we wish you continued success and much happiness, because you sure made us happy. We love you all at *Modern Ferret Magazine!!*

With love and thanks,
Sheena Staples, co-founder of the Greater Vancouver Ferret Association and operator of Wherret Ferrets Halfway House & the Greater Vancouver Ferret Information Service and of course the ferrets too, BooBoo, Joopie, Ashley, Milo, Massy, Paczek, Big Tunk, and Sophie.

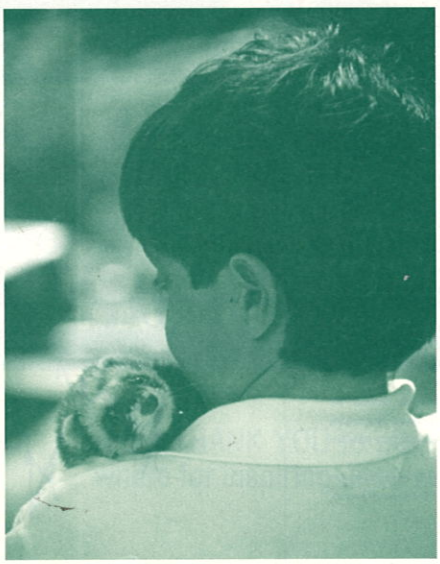
Blush, blush, blush. You're very welcome. — Mary.

Dear Mary,

Thanks so much for spending so much time with me on the phone and explaining cardiomyopathy. I also learned a great deal about choosing and training a ferret — I'm really grateful... Also for your tips on where to go — I spoke with David at "Animals Alive" and I'm taking my son Jesse there today! He doesn't know it yet, but we're getting <u>two!</u> ferrets... I'm sad to think Snoopy might have been lonesome. I'm enclosing a picture of Jesse and Snoopy — thought you might enjoy seeing it.

You are doing such a great service for people like us who love these funny, happy, little creatures and want to enjoy them as long as possible. I hope our new friends will be healthy!

Thanks so much again —
Best regards,
Barbara Schenendorf
Port Washington, NY



Jesse and his late beloved "Snoopy"

Dear Mary,

Thank you for the info you faxed us, and for responding so promptly! You were a <u>great</u> help!!! Felicia (the sick ferret) thanks you, also. We now know what to do and hopefully [we can keep] it from happening again to her or any of the other ferrets.

Thank you,
Roger & Ellie Wolfert

We try to return phone calls (and faxes and e-mail) to anyone who has a problem with a ferret — especially if the ferret is sick. We're glad we were able to help Felicia! — Mary.

Gentlemen:

I was really pleased to read your article on lost ferrets (Mod Ferret #6). I recently went through a miserable week looking for Me-Gosh who escaped through a hole in back of a kitchen cabinet. I alerted the doorman of my building and sure enough, one day he said: "Call the apartment under yours now!" Me-Gosh found his way through the walls to [my downstairs neighbor's] kitchen cabinet! Imagine her shock when she opened her cabinet and saw this ferret staring back at her! It could have been a disaster.

[Me-Gosh] slept for three days and it took him a week to recover fully. He's back to his ol' happy, funny self again, and I'm getting the lost ferret kit you mentioned.

Thanks a lot,
Lauryne & Me-Gosh
New York, NY

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Reach ferret owners!

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Oceanside NY 11572
(516) 536-6615

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Herndon VA 20172
(540) 364-4811
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Alicia or Dino Drakiotes
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(603) 876-4975
ferretwise@top.monad.net

New York
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The Latest Word

National Educational Organization Formed

Ferret Enthusiasts for Education and Legislation (F.E.E.L.) has been formed by a group of concerned ferret owners to help educate and enhance public awareness of ferrets throughout the United States. Established in response to recent bite incidents wherein ferrets were killed and tested for rabies (the ferrets tested negative for the virus), one of the first items on the group's agenda is to address the kill-and-test policy in New Jersey. The organization is preparing petitions that, it is hoped, will eventually help to change laws and policies regarding ferrets anywhere such changes are needed. F.E.E.L. will address issues of required rabies and distemper vaccinations, quarantine periods for vaccinated ferrets, and reclassification of ferrets as domestic animals in locales where they are not so classified. The group is funded entirely by donations; no membership dues or fees are charged. F.E.E.L. is currently involved in membership drives. For further information about F.E.E.L., contact Anne Ryan at 908-249-4491 or e-mail ducklite@mars.superlink.net.

Free T-Shirt Offer

The Ferret Fun Factory — makers of all sorts of ferret stuff like tents, hammocks, sleeping tubes, and carry bags — is giving away T-shirts for free. Send two UPC codes from Ferret Fun Factory items to the Ferret Fun Factory and they will send you a "Zippy, Zow, Wowie Cool T-shirt" (a "Ferret Fun" T-shirt for humans). Include $4.00 for shipping and handling and indicate size L or XL. T-shirts are available while supplies last. Send your UPCs and check/money order to:

The Ferret Fun Factory
T-Shirt Give Away
6109 SW 124th Ave
Beaverton OR 97008

New Club In West Virginia

Several ferret owners are forming a club in West Virginia. They were unable to locate any clubs in their area and decided to put forth the effort themselves. For information contact Shirley Myer at 304-884-7058 or Carol Browning 304-682-4629.

Florida Ferret Found To Be Rabid

A ferret involved in a bite incident in Florida tested positive for the rabies virus. The ferret had not been vaccinated and had been kept outdoors. Although this was only the first time a ferret in Florida was found to be infected with the virus, the Florida Department of Health as decided to take a hard-line approach regarding ferret bite incidents. The Department has recommended that any ferret involved in a bite incident be killed and tested for rabies, regardless of the ferret's vaccination status or whether there was risk of exposure to a rabid animal. Many Florida ferret owners and advocacy groups feel that the Department of Health has overreacted to the situation and are exploring ways to get the Department of Health to establish a quarantine period for vaccinated ferrets. Although most ferret owners keep their ferrets inside their homes, some do keep ferrets outside in some type of cage. To help protect your ferret, make sure he is up-to-date on his rabies vaccinations and keep him in your house.

The Latest From California

In December, the Fish and Game Department Commission is expected to publish notice of its intent to amend the regulation banning ferrets. The Commission has the authority to remove ferrets from the list of prohibited wildlife, thus legalizing them. After the notice has been published, the Commission will open a window on public commentary for 45 days beginning sometime in January 1997. After the 45-day window is closed in February 1997, hearings will be held. Based on previous reports, California residents can expect two hearings: one in southern California and one in northern California. California legalization groups ask that residents be prepared to get involved when the Commission opens the window of commentary. They also ask that residents hold off on letter writing until the Commission officially requests comments.

Selling Ferrets In MA Gets Easier

When ferrets were legalized in Massachusetts earlier this year, rabies vaccination requirements made it difficult for pet stores to sell ferrets. Massachusetts law requires all ferrets to be vaccinated against rabies. Recent amendments to the legislation shift the responsibility for vaccinating ferrets against rabies from the seller to the owner. Originally, ferrets had to be vaccinated against rabies before they could be sold in Massachusetts, creating a problem for pet shops that wanted to sell ferrets. The major suppliers of ferrets to pet shops ship ferret kits approximately 8 to 10 weeks before they are old enough to receive the rabies vaccination. Thus, if they wanted to sell ferrets, pet shops had to house the kits until they could be vaccinated — something most stores could not do. The new regulations will allow the stores to sell kits before they receive a rabies vaccination. Stores seem to be pleased with the new rules. Meanwhile, many ferret shelter groups are concerned that the increased sale of ferrets to a population with relatively little ferret knowledge will increase the number of unwanted ferrets in the state.

Free Ferret Care Brochures

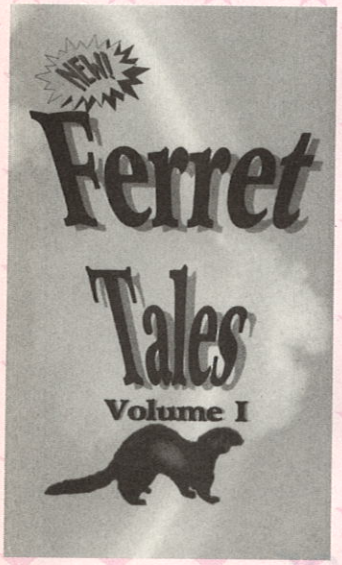
Modern Ferret has produced the first in its line of *Caring for Your Ferret* brochures — *Ear Cleaning*. If you would like a copy of the brochure, send us a self-addressed stamped business size (#10) envelope with a note requesting the brochure. If you run a club or shelter and would like Ear Cleaning brochures to distribute to your members or to potential or new ferret owners, give us a call or drop us a note. Brochures are also available to veterinarians. Have your veterinarian call, fax, or write us, and we'll send a packet of brochures for his or her ferret clients.

FML Ferret Shelter Support Program

There is a new program to generate funds to help ferret shelters that are part of the internet *Ferret Mailing List*. The coupon division of Dosh and Associates will administer the program. For each $25.00 coupon book you order, D&A will place $10.00 in the FML Shelter Fund. You will receive a book of coupons which will save you $200 on your grocery bills, on over 1,200 major name brand products. For more information about this program, e-mail Judith White at ferreton@pond.com. You can contact D&A for an order form at spdjr@citrus.infi.net or Karen Carby at klcarby@gte.net or phone 1 (800) 743-3674.

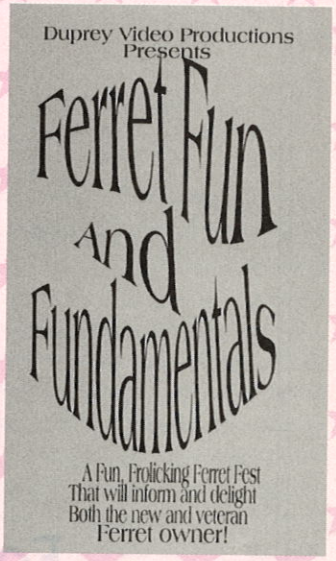
The Video Roundup

Sometimes you just want to relax and watch a video. Here's a rundown of four educational videos about ferrets. There's a brief description and contact information for each one. Remember that you should always consult several sources for information about ferrets — including books, videos, clubs, and other resources.



Ferret Tales
by Mosaic Video, 29308 Rosebriar, Saint Claire Shores, MI 48081 — 1-800-807-4617 or 1-810-777-2192

This 70-minute video covers much of the basics of selecting and caring for a ferret. Accomplished ferret breeder, Micki Wingate, shares her knowledge and experience. Topics covered include: selecting a ferret; ferrets and your family; appropriate toys; litter training; feeding; nip-training; health; adding new ferrets to your family; and caring for the older ferret.

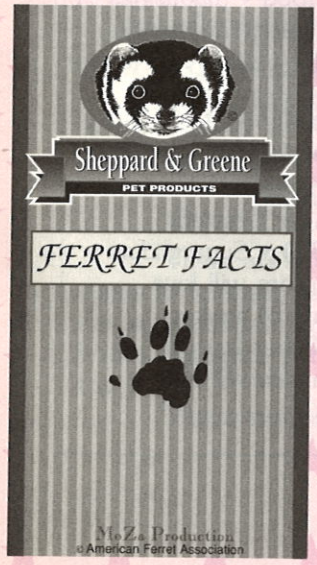


Ferret Fun and Fundamentals
by Duprey Video Productions, 47 East Wright Ave, Waterloo, NY 13165 — 315-539-0823

A 50-minute video that covers everything from what to look for in a ferret to ferretproofing, feeding, training, and grooming. The video is divided into these sections: What Is a Ferret?; So You've Got Yourself a Ferret; Ferret Must-Haves; Your Ferret's Diet; Getting To Know Your Pet; Collar and Harness Training; Litter Training and House Breaking; Shoulder and Hood Training; Grooming; Do's and Don'ts; National Ferret Groups; and Supplemental Diet.

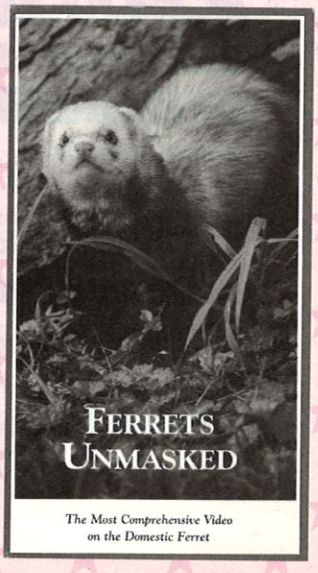
Ferret Facts
produced by MoZa for Sheppard & Greene Pet Products, Inc., PO Box 330787, Miami, FL 33233 — 800-851-6661

A 22-minute video that covers the natural history of ferrets, basics of ferret care and feeding, and a brief guide to some common ferret medical problems. Contents include: History; colors; choosing a ferret; housing & bedding; litter box; feeding; ferretproofing; health; and grooming. Also included is a section on ferret resources.



Ferrets Unmasked
by Beach Party Productions, Baltimore, MD — 800-844-0688

One of the first videos about domestic ferrets. This video (approximate 105-minute running time) includes sections on: choosing a ferret; cages and accessories; housebreaking; traveling with your ferret; ferretproofing; grooming; nutrition; health care; myths about ferrets; breeding; ferrets and strangers; laws affecting ferrets; and showing ferrets. Also features a directory of ferret organizations.



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That's not all. You'll love the free lecture program that runs all day both days.

Bring the kids ... 'cause there will be feature attractions like a petting zoo, a really fascinating eagle exhibit, and other neat exotic animal exhibits.

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Funny Ferret Tricks

Here are the winning entries in the Funny Ferret Tricks Humor Contest sponsored by Eight In One Pet Products, makers of Ferret Ultrablend Diet. See the entry rules on the Contests Page (page 43) of this issue!

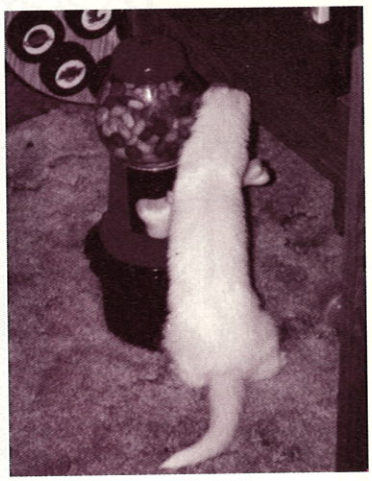
Where Have All the Potatoes Gone?
by Deana Beek, Sedgwick, KS
Ferret: Bandit

My story began several months ago when I started noticing potatoes disappearing from the top bin of my vegetable cart. On occasion they would end up in my sock drawer (located under the waterbed). My husband became the prime suspect, and I kept accusing him of taking and hiding all the potatoes. I thought this was some kind of sick joke he was playing on me, but he kept insisting that he was not the guilty party. Well, how else could potatoes get in there?

Then one evening while watching a movie, a streak of fur flew by. I heard a loud thud followed by a potato that went rolling down the hallway! It was Bandit!! He was the criminal! He stopped dead in his tracks, looked me straight in the eye, then snatched up his goods and fled the scene. Not wanting to spoil the fun, I decided to let him go about his business.

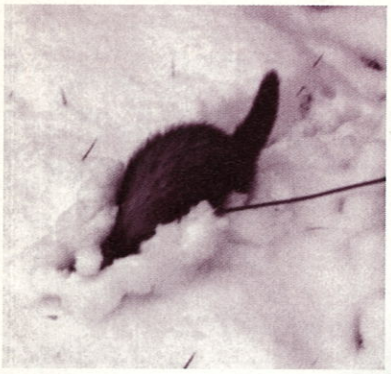
A short time later I came across the stolen goods. They were stashed under the waterbed, behind the drawers. I began pulling out potatoes one by one ... large ones, small ones, shriveled ones, SPROUTING ones, and the start of a small vine! Apparently some of these things had been there for quite some time. It was cool and dark under there, and these things were growing!! What on earth was he planning on doing with all these potatoes?

To make a long story short, the stolen goods were recovered, and Bandit is now wanted for potato theft and growing with the intent to sell. He still continues his thieving habit on a regular basis, however, his days of gardening under the bed are over!



by Shannon Roberts, Titusville, FL
Ferret: Boochie

I remember the day when Shannon, my human mom, was all excited about the new toy she bought for Weasel. Weasel, who I guess looks kinda like a big ferret but of course only has half the brains, is the family dog. After about a half an hour of assembling, the new mysterious toy was ready to go. Weasel sat there and looked at it not knowing what to do. Shannon explained that it was a Yuppy-Puppy Doggie Treat Machine, whatever that means, and that when you push the bone lever down, a treat will come out. Patiently Shannon tried to teach Weasel how to use the machine. Why, I don't know, because every ferret knows that dogs, well, dogs just aren't too bright. After about two weeks Shannon almost gave up on Weasel totally. Her superior demonstrations were not a waste though. I, Boochie, the smartest albino ferret in the world, watched intently every day as Shannon tried to teach the dog. A few days later Shannon was telling Lee, our human dad, that she kept hearing treats come out of the doggie treat machine. And then she would see me run right under the couch. Any ferret knows that under the couch is the best hiding spot in the world. So anyway, Shannon decided to watch me very closely when I came back out. In her mind she could swear that I was doing the treat machine, but she thought that was impossible. Sure enough, I proved her wrong. For a ferret, nothing is impossible, except maybe enjoying baths. Shannon couldn't believe that I, Boochie, had learned to master the Yuppy-Puppy Doggie Treat Machine before "The Magnificent Weasel." I guess Weasel was so ashamed that he too learned how to use it a couple of days later. Now I have to share all those treats with the stinking dog.



Snow Way to Treat a Ferret
by Kathy & David Cook, Media, PA
Ferret: Buster

We got our very first ferret, Buster, last year. We've had a lot of fun playing with him — he's taken walks in the park with us in the summer, jumped in piles of autumn leaves, and enthusiastically opened his own (and others') presents at Christmas.

We couldn't wait to take Buster outside after the first snowfall of winter. Now, we didn't think he'd care for it at all. He doesn't like the cold; if we're outside and the slightest breeze comes up, or if it's anywhere below, maybe, 70 degrees, he turns tail and heads back for the front door. And he doesn't like to get his feet wet. If he hops into the bathtub to get his usual "tubby drinks" and anyone has recently taken a shower, it's hilarious to see the thoroughly disgusted look on his face as he tries to lift up all four feet simultaneously!

So last December, as an experiment we were sure was doomed to failure, out into the snow we all went. Imagine our surprise when Buster paused, looked around in wonder, threw a few snootfuls of snow into the air, then joyfully took off burrowing about six inches under, with just the end of his leash showing. It looked like a cartoon; all that could be seen was a tunnel of piled-up snow appearing to move rapidly on its own!

Though we're now in the midst of July and doing all of our summer fun things, we still think he sometimes searches the skies like an elementary school kid, fervently wishing for a "snow day."

by Kristi Jirikovic
Ferret: Phoebe

I have a one-and-half-year-old ferret named Phoebe who has a very unusual hobby. She has become a literary artist and loves to write using the keyboard on my computer. Usually Phoebe sits contentedly on my shoulder while I type up papers, but then one day she discovered the keyboard and was hooked. Phoebe just loves to walk back and forth across the buttons on the keyboard. I think she likes the click, click, click sound they make when she steps on them. I'm not sure why, but they intrigue her. Some of her most recent documents include:

fnhbhgoipjnlmk,nioewoiewrvmnvbnjkhg
vcbnv....hgfkityoijkglkj;gjgkftjvjdeslk;po
zsxdcv ,kj; . bhiujnkfrtyw3442uh7jn k p[

Now Phoebe must stay in her cage whenever I type because when she starts writing, I never get any work done!

French Kissing
(Told by Ginger the ferret)
by Cindy Petrauskas, Burlington CT
Ferret: Ginger

I've always liked the taste of people. Now don't take this the wrong way, I don't bite, I lick. Once I did bite and that ended with me dumped in a ferret shelter.

I owe all my fame to Cindy, who brought me and Jahbu, my new bestest friend, to the 9th FACT [Ferret Association of Connecticut] Ferret Frolic. It just so happens that they have a "judged by the people" part of the show where the ferrets show off their tricks.

"What am I going to do?" I thought. "I don't know any tricks!" Suddenly I had an idea, but how would I tell Cindy? After a little thought I reached up and licked Cindy's cheek. I think she caught my idea because she went over to the ring and whispered, "It's all up to you now, do your best!"

With that, she brought me up to her lips and I licked. I licked like I never licked before. Boy, did it taste good!

All around me people were laughing and pointing. I just kept on licking because I was doing this for Cindy.

The people were still laughing, but now they were saying more like, "Look, they are French kissing, Ha, Ha, Ha."

Well to make a long story short, Cindy got her second place ribbon and I got a whole bunch of treats and a lot of fame!

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8 in 1

Our New Cage!

Well, we finally went down to visit Peter Koch and get a new cage for the Modern Ferrets. This cage fits in the same space as our old cage, but features **four** levels (a ferret on each level). Now we have three water bottles, three food bowls, and two litterboxes! There's a hammock, a hanging tunnel, a hammocktent, and a snooze-sack! Everybody is MUCH happier!

Visiting Peter Koch is a lot of fun, and you sure get to see some nice cages — pictured here are some of his new models. Peter makes these cages himself, to his exacting specifications.

You can reach Peter Koch at the Friends of Ferrets Shelter & Rescue, 490 Flock Road, Mercerville NJ 08619-1438. Or call **609-586-0007**. Although Peter does not ship his cages, he does travel a lot to various ferret shows.

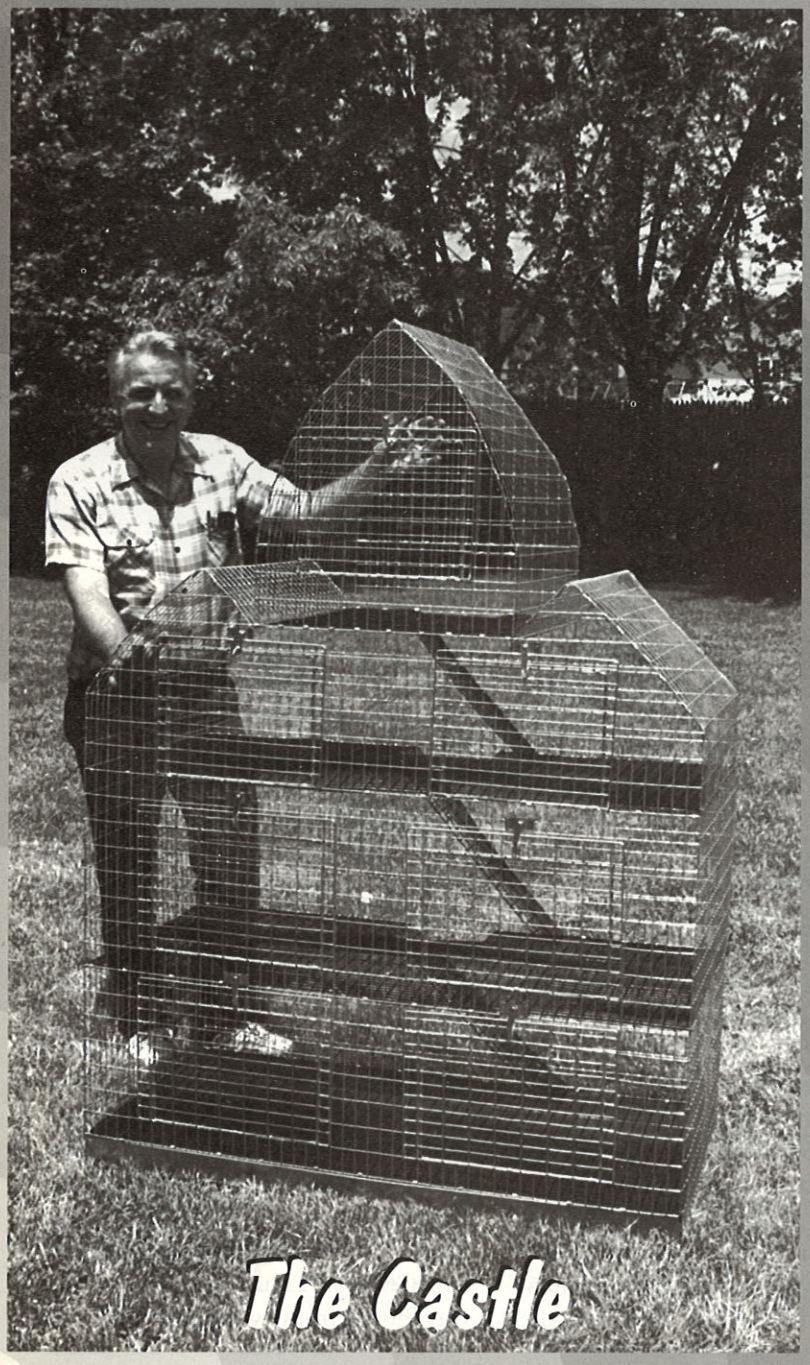
P.S. - Inside is Ralph on the bottom, Sabrina in the hammocktent, Marshmallow standing pretty on the third floor, and Knuks hidden on the top floor. That's our little skunk stuffed animal sitting on top.

Here's Peter Koch with some of his latest models. As soon as we have some space to put one, we're going to get one of these works of art!

The Cathedral

There's plenty of room in these for litterboxes, hammocks, bowls of food, and even all that neat stuff of yours that your ferret otherwise has to hide behind the couch.

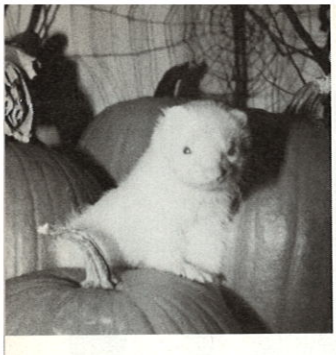
No boring boxy shapes here! Plenty of interesting architecture you'll want to show off in your living room.



The Castle

These cages have plenty of doors, so your ferret can never hide where you can't reach him.

Nope. Peter Koch isn't tiny — these cages are BIG! Plenty of room for lots of ferrets! However, each cage is no more than two feet from front to back, so that you can fit them through a standard doorway. This is important if you want to get the cage into your house, as well as for fire safety if you ever need to get your cage out.



A Ferret Named Puck

Living With Insulinoma

By Puck's Mom

"Puck" is the name of my oldest ferret. He is a male albino, born around May 20, 1990. I was never interested in owning, or should I say living with, an albino pet of any kind (I was looking for a sable) until I met Puck.

He was a "Black Market" baby. The breeder was an idiot, but if not for him I guess there would be no Puck. I met this guy out in a parking lot. I had gotten his number through a *source* — asking around. He had a box with him, and in it was Puck, along with a few other kits. I'm not sure if I picked Puck or if he picked me, but it was love at first sight. (I *was* in love.) This poor little flea-infested beauty changed my whole outlook on all albino animals, not just ferrets. What a beautiful baby!! So ... home he came. This was the beginning of a beautiful friendship.

The first thing I did was get rid of his fleas. Then I needed a name for him. The name "Puck" was only to be temporary. I was searching for an Indian name that meant "Mischievous Ghost." "Duende" was the name chosen first. Then my friend Jen suggested "Puck," a character from Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, who by the way was *very* mischievous. As you can see, the name stuck. No other name would suit him. (Except, maybe the nickname "Snow Toes" that my then 3-year-old nephew Corey gave him [Corey is now 7 years old].)

Tiśizzëy and Puck hangin' out

On April 8, 1995, I found out that Puck has *insulinoma*, a tumor of the pancreas that leads to high insulin production and low blood sugar. Sometimes Puck would stare off in a daze. I figured that was just Puck. I watched him closely, reporting any changes I noticed to his veterinarian, my veterinarian friends, and Jen. I documented everything (weight changes, skin conditions etc.). I am sure at times they thought I was nuts! I guess maybe I am a little, but the documentation sure came in handy at times. Then the sores on his skin became more frequent and grew in number. He began pawing at his mouth and salivating — his whole paw would be soaked with saliva. He would make a sound when he would retch, as if he just tasted something awful. I would try giving him some Nutri-Cal, thinking maybe it was a bad taste in his mouth, and it seemed to help.

During this time I was still doing a lot of reading of medical information regarding insulinoma. Jen sent me some information by Susan A. Brown, DVM, that described a lot of Puck's symptoms — heck, all of his symptoms. They were all listed under "insulinoma." I must have cried all the way home from work that day, and

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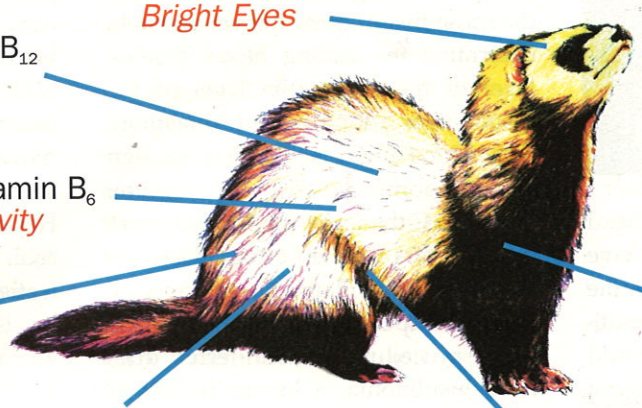

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Growth, Development & Activity

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Supple Haircoat

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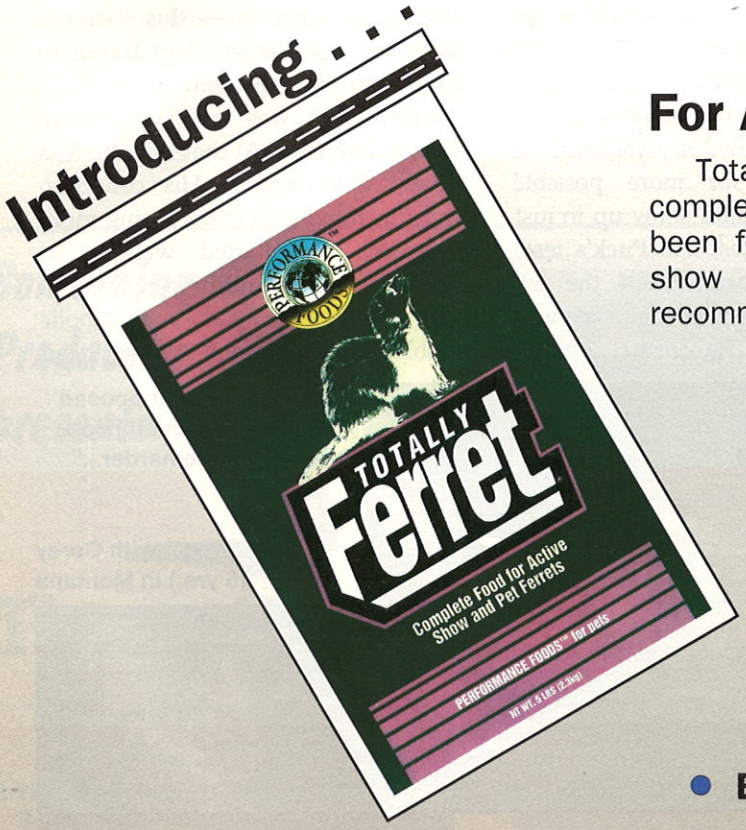
Strong Bones

Fiber, Selenium & Thiamin (B_1)
Digestive System & Appetite

Pantothenic Acid, Folic Acid & Arachidonic Acid
Reproduction & Lactation



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Patricia Willard has 11 years within the pet food industry. As VP of Performance Foods, Inc., her functions include marketing promotions and advertising.

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Copies of # 4, 5, and 6 are still available! See page 45 for details!

up until my husband came home. I knew this was what Puck must have and I knew it was bad. Part of the article had said that signs of insulinoma look a lot like what you would see with occasional episodes of hypoglycemia (low blood sugar). It also stated that the tumors produce high levels of insulin, which forces glucose (essentially, sugar) out of the blood stream and into the cells very quickly. With low glucose levels in the blood, the brain doesn't get the "food" it needs and may act erratically. The muscles become weakened, and the body's natural response is to try to "correct" the situation by bringing the blood glucose level back to normal. That's why you only see the signs intermittently. Early on in the disease, the symptoms may be mild and short-lived; the body's regulatory mechanisms may be able to deal with the blood sugar fluctuations, to some degree. Some of the other early symptoms of these hypoglycemic attacks are short periods of hind-leg weakness or lethargy. You might also see the ferret staring blankly into space for a few minutes, unaware of his surroundings.

Further on in the disease, the ferret might salivate and become nauseous (you'll see him paw at his mouth). You might also see the muscle weakness and lethargy become worse and last longer. When the disease is even further progressed, the ferret might have seizures, go into a coma, and eventually die. Sometimes the veterinarian will notice the ferret's spleen is enlarged.

It is said insulinoma is such a common problem in ferrets that some ferrets do not show obvious signs of having it. Many veterinarians recommend doing a fasting blood glucose test at least once a year on all ferrets 3 years of age or older.

I took Puck to his vet to run a CBC (complete blood count). To properly diagnose insulinoma, the vet needs to determine the fasting blood glucose level of the ferret (the level of the blood sugar after a period of fasting). If the blood sugar is low, that is a sign of insulinoma. I had read that you should fast the ferret for 4 to not more than 6 hours. I called a few places for more recommendations — almost all the vets I spoke to recommended the same procedure. If the ferret does have insulinoma, a longer period of fasting may throw him into a serious hypoglycemic attack. I took Puck's food away for a few hours before we had to go to the vet (he was asleep and did not miss it). I brought some Nutri-Cal with me in case he did have an attack (the sugar in Nutri-Cal can help bring a ferret out of a hypoglycemic attack). I wanted my vet to run a CBC to check for more possible problems than would show up in just a blood glucose test. All Puck's tests came back normal, except the expected. His fasting blood glucose was low, 40 mg/dl. The normal level is said to be 90 mg/dl. Part of me was relieved to finally know, but it was still so hard to imagine losing him.

My only options for Puck at that time were surgery, which would prolong his life for who knows how long, or medication to help him with his symptoms.

His veterinarian put him on prednisolone sodium phosphate. At five months (September 8, 1995) since his diagnosis he was acting great! Happy, bouncy, very playful, and rolling around on his back kicking his feeties about like a baby. Puck thinks he is fine. We had Puck's blood glucose level tested again on November 25, 1995, and it was low, dropping to 50 mg/dl. So his vet raised the dose of his medication. We switched to the pill form of the medication. I crush it up and mix it with a small amount of Nutri-Cal — this seems to work out a lot better than trying to get him to take the liquid.

April 1996 was one year since Puck's diagnosis. At that time he was slowly deteriorating. His condition and functioning were becoming more impaired. He started walking in clockwise circles and his vet was not sure whether is was a metabolic problem or a tumor in his head

"I know I'm not supposed to eat candy... but if I can just pull a little harder..."

Puck (5 yrs.) with Corey (6 yrs.) in Montana

Quite a handful...

affecting his thinking. The fur loss is caused by either his overall ill health and/or the long-term high dose of his medication. He hasn't been using his litter box very well — OK, he hasn't been using it at all. The poor little guy tries — he walks into it but swings his rear out of it (you have to give him credit for trying!!). So, we use lots of newspaper with a plastic trash bag underneath to line it, and use a mix of Citri-fresh litter and newspaper pellet litter for odor control. I have to pin down his blankies so they are not tossed into the feces. I'd have to say the cage is 80% bathroom now.

Unfortunately, one of my other babies, Puck's 5-year-old buddy "Skizzy" (Tiŝizzëy), a sable male, was diagnosed with insulinoma also. For a while there, we thought we may lose him before Puck. He took a big nose-dive in his blood glucose count and was not responding to his medication at all (actually, his glucose level kept dropping). Now he seems pretty stable and is on the same dose of medication as Puck. Every morning and evening I sit with them to make sure they are eating OK. Now I feed a mix of pureed (in the blender) Totally Ferret mixed with 1/2 water to make sure they're getting water and sometimes I add feline maintenance.

They spend the majority of time resting. And they save up enough energy to play a little and snoop around a bit. For now, I will just continue to spoil, cuddle, and love them all I can, for as long as I can, and thank the Lord for making them such a big part of my life. They are wonderful gifts. When it is their time, I will carry them in my heart and memory forever.

UPDATE, August 15, 1996: Puck is sleeping a lot more and is moving slower, but he's still hanging in there. He is no longer walking in circles (yea!) and has quite the pot belly. Skizzy's condition worsened over time until he lost nearly all control of his hind legs. His veterinarian and I decided to put Skizzy down on August 2. The vet performed a necropsy so she could learn more about the disease and use that knowledge to help other ferrets (information about ferrets is scarce in California). Losing Skizzy was hard, but somehow knowing it could help some other little guy makes it mean more than just dying.

Puck's Mom is a ferret owner living in California with Puck's Dad and their other ferrets — Deĝis (pronounced: Dekie), Tink, and Koali. Skizzy will always be with them.

Puck loves 'nanas

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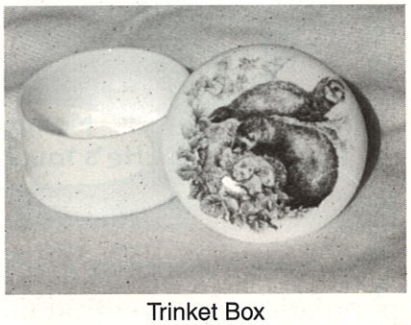

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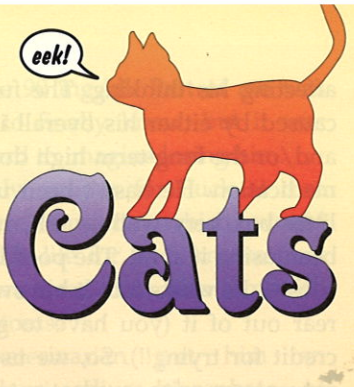
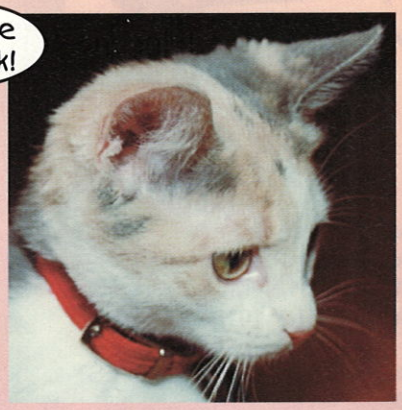
MULTI-PET HOUSEHOLDS:

Ferrets & Cats



By Pamela Grant

Photo of Sunny (cat) & Moon (ferret) by Molly Anderson (see last issue's Pink Noses)



We have a doormat that reads: "Welcome to the zoo." That is an appropriate reflection on the population living within our walls. Our household consists of 22 ferrets, 8 cats, 1 dog, a rabbit, 2 mice, 2 hamsters, and other assorted rodents — not to mention all of the shelter ferrets (which number close to 20 at this writing). With that said, let me tell you a little about my experiences with integrating ferrets into this household.

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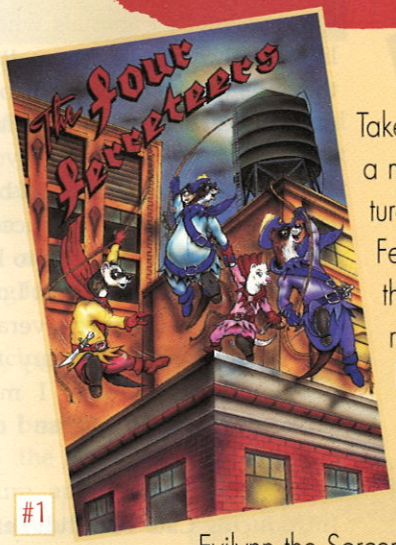

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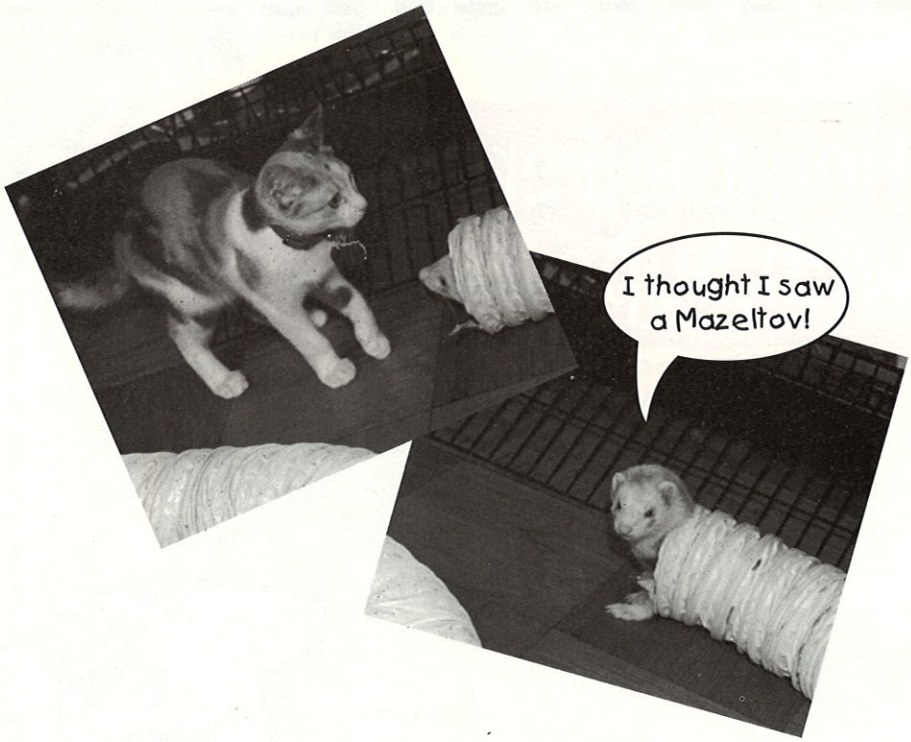

Ferrets are carnivores and therefore considered predators by nature. Even though domestic ferrets have very little hunting instinct left, they are still attracted to movement. Ferrets also have a scent about them — whether or not they are descented — which prey animals recognize and fear. This is why pet ferrets who have never been outdoors in their entire lives can still drive a rabbit out of its nest by just walking down the entrance of a warren.

I have had several ferrets surrendered to my shelter because the ferret escaped the cage and discovered the mouse cage. Or the children in the household thought the ferret might like to play with the hamster or guinea pig. The ferret does what comes naturally and grabs the small moving object. Sometimes he shakes it, most times he just scares it, unfortunately, usually to death. Surrendering the ferret to the shelter because he was acting naturally is not protecting the children of the household. Instead, it teaches them that if you don't like reality, you can give it to someone else to deal with — pass on the responsibility.

Ferrets do not make good pets for households with rabbits, rodents, reptiles, birds, or children under three years of age. Not because ferrets would naturally be inclined to attack any of these, but because these species are not capable of handling a chance encounter with a ferret in a manner that would render the situation uneventful. Adult supervision and responsible housing and maintenance are required for the above species to coexist in the same environment. My husband has set the rabbit loose in the house without my knowledge, and the rabbit has accidentally met ferrets whom I had allowed out for play. Luckily, these were older, altered ferrets and the ferret and rabbit just sniffed noses and went their separate ways. Had one of my breeding hobs been out, it would have been an entirely different story.

Cats, also being carnivores and predators, have some degree of respect and understanding concerning ferrets. Cats seem to know that even though ferrets are smaller (usually) than they are and smell different, they are worthy opponents in play and companionship. There will always be those individual animals who do not like another specie no matter what they are, just as there are people who do not care for being with other people.

I was a cat owner before I became a ferret owner. I have introduced cats to ferrets, ferrets to cats, cats to kits, and ferrets to kittens. Every cat I own was once a stray. I also have several "feral" cats (that is, wild — very wary of people) living indoors. I make the above distinctions because I do think it makes a difference.

Introducing Cats To Adult Ferrets

Cats either care or they don't. Hopefully, before you get a ferret, you already know your cat well. The introduction should be planned and supervised just as if you were bringing a new kitten into your home. As hard as it is, you have to concentrate on giving attention to your cat, making sure that she knows she is still the top pet in your heart. Don't let the ferret steal the cat's toys, use her bed or eat out of her food dish. Play with the cat while the ferret is exploring another room. For a few days before actually meeting the ferret face to face, let the cat check out the ferret's area only when the ferret is confined, so the cat can get used to the smell. When you and the cat are ready, sit with the cat on your lap and allow the ferret to wander into the room. Watch the cat, talk to the cat, and sort of ignore the ferret. More than likely, the cat will get off you to check out the ferret. Watch their behavior. My cats mostly ignore the ferrets, but I do have one who will sit and bop any ferret in a game of "pop goes the weasel" as the ferret tries to get out from under furniture or out of playing

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tubes. My cats all have their claws and have never harmed a ferret. If a ferret nips a cat on the heel or tail, the cat may run or retaliate. Observe behavior for a few days before taking anything for granted.

Introducing Cats To Kits

When bringing home a baby ferret (kit), the above procedure applies as well. But until the kit has grown to a size where he is capable of getting out of harm's way quickly, you may not wish to let the cat and kit alone unsupervised. I have heard of one case where a cat stalked and injured a ferret. If you would not leave a human child unattended with a certain cat, then by no means leave your ferret child alone with her.

If you can't trust pets with each other, do not leave them unattended. This is part of responsible pet ownership.

Introducing Ferrets To Cats

Ferrets view all things as play toys. They will "go after" any moving object no matter what the size. If you are getting a new cat, the ferret will harass her and probably make her nervous. Try to let the cat get used to you and your household routines before introducing the ferret, unless each can have a separate run area of the house. My cats can come and go as they please in the ferret room, and usually go very quickly once they discover ferrets are loose. I believe that every animal deserves a space of his or her own, so my ferrets do not get free run of the house very often. They do have their own "rooms" and feel comfortable there.

Introducing Ferrets To Kittens

This process is a lot like introducing a cat to a kit, so you should keep the previous section in mind. An adult ferret can injure a kitten. After all, cats have thin skin as people do, and the ferret might be inclined to bite, drag around, and scare a kitten. Kitten claws may retaliate as well. It is best to let the kitten grow out of the awkward stage before trusting these two hyper types alone.

Ferrets And Feral Cats

Feral cats are presumed to be experienced hunters. I have never had a problem with any of my feral cats stalking my ferrets. Cats seem to know that the ferret is capable of fending for itself if needed, and they respect that.

The Happy Home

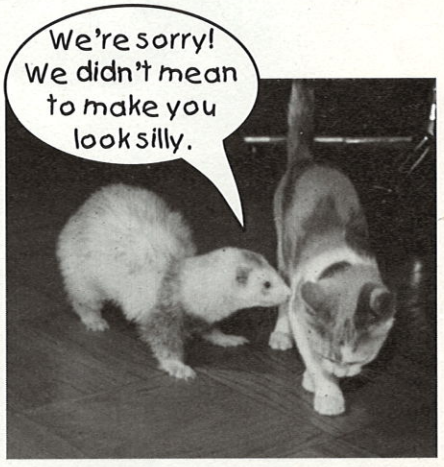
If you have any concerns about whether your present pet will accept another species in the household, you might want to ask a friend to "lend" you their pet that is similar to the one you are considering acquiring. Another option is to take your pet to the pet shop or home of the pet you want to bring home to see if there are sparks before you make the final decision. I always recommend that people wanting a companion for their ferret bring the ferret with them when they come to my shelter. Why not try this with other animals?

The key to being a good family is to be friends. Your pets need to be friends to each other as well as to strangers and newcomers. Be responsible, as well. These are animals and do not perceive the house you live in as just a place to live. Animals consider your house their territory and a place for them to protect. Be observant, and if you can't trust pets with each other, do not leave them unattended. This is part of responsible pet ownership.

Pamela Grant established The Ferrets of Pet Pals shelter & rescue in Annandale, VA, in 1988. The shelter is closing temporarily due to relocation. Pam is also Director of Shelters That Adopt & Rescue (STAR) Ferrets, a network of ferret shelters and owners throughout the United States.*

For a free listing of ferret shelters, contacts, vets, supplies, clubs, etc., in your state, send a LONG self-addressed stamped envelope to: STAR Ferrets, P.O. Box 1714, Springfield, VA 22151-0714. If you have Internet access, please visit STAR*'s homepage at:*
<http://www.csc.peachnet.edu/~rpoore/STAR/STAR.html>.

A big THANK YOU to Carrie Harbach and Adam Schor for letting us photograph their kitty Mazeltov and their ferrets Gonzo, Baby, Fozzie, and Panda.



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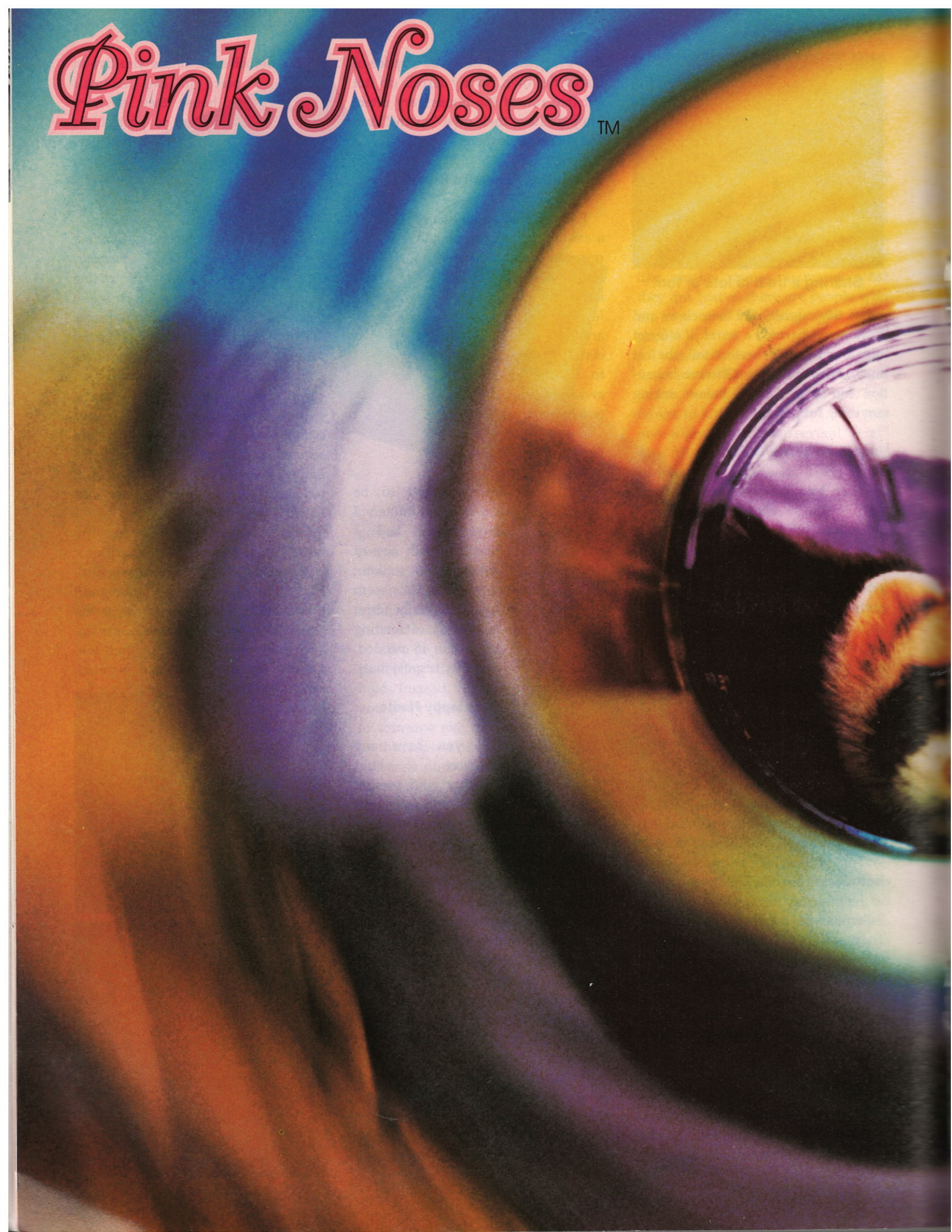
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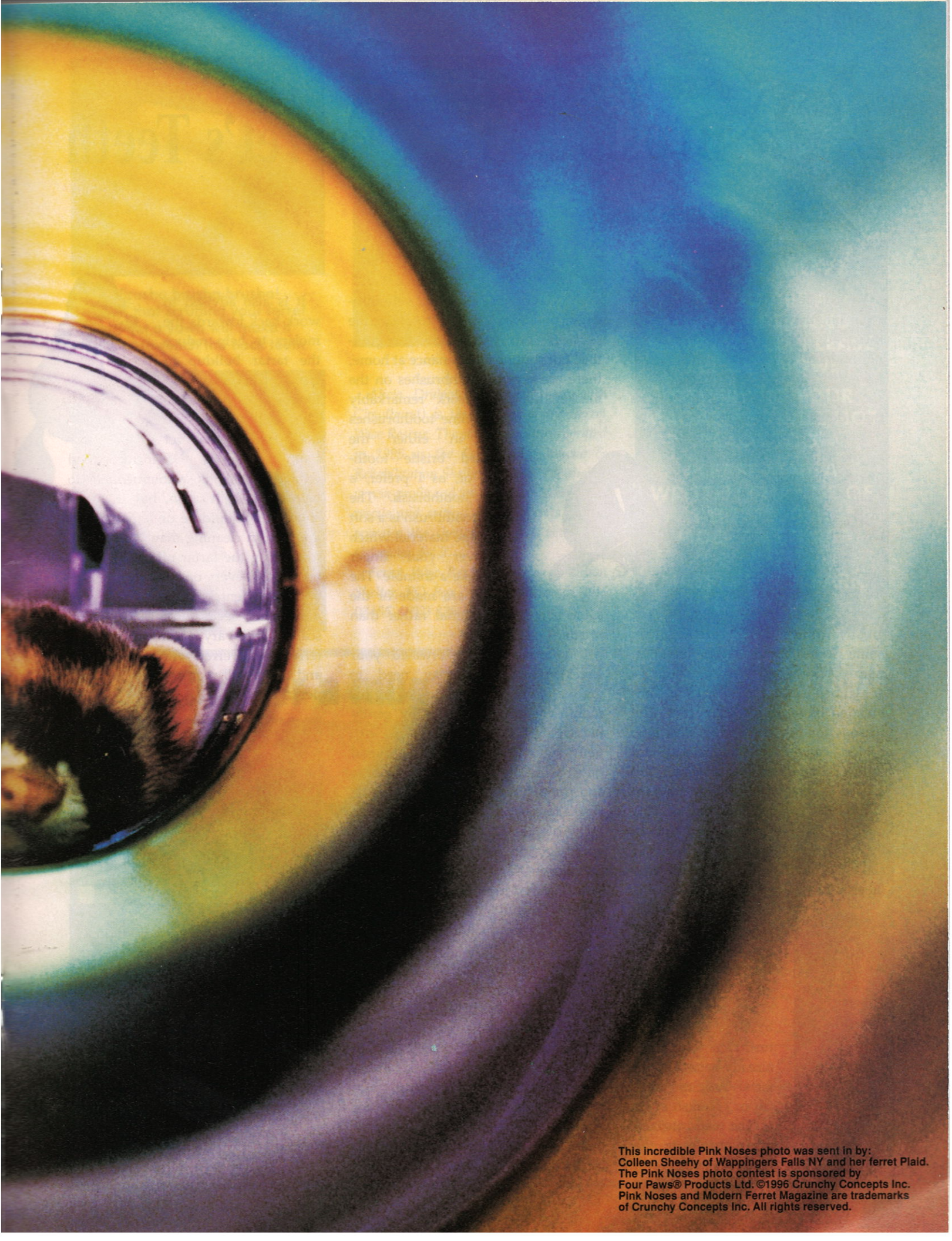

This incredible Pink Noses photo was sent in by:
Colleen Sheehy of Wappingers Falls NY and her ferret Plaid.
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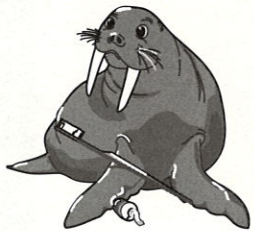
FERRET CARE

Brushing Your Ferret's Teeth

By Alicia Drakiotes

Most ferret owners are meticulous regarding the care and maintenance of their pets, but many do not realize the importance of good dental care. Owners who regularly or occasionally show their domestic ferrets realize that dental hygiene is taken into consideration by the judges. However, owners do not always realize that dental hygiene is very important for their ferret's overall health and well-being.



Ferrets, like other companion animals, can benefit greatly from a dental care regimen. Some veterinarians recommend a twice-monthly basic tooth brushing — a regimen similar to a cat's recommended basic oral hygiene care. The reasons for this are varied. Basically, bacteria can enter the animal's system through inflamed gums which are caused by plaque buildup commonly identified as periodontal disease. This can be a cause of several conditions in the ferret including tooth root abscesses, endocarditis or pericarditis (heart disease), and low-grade chronic infections which can lead to weight loss, susceptibility to infections in general, and lethargy.

Typical Pet Toothbrush

So, how do you brush a ferret's teeth? If the teeth already have a heavy tartar buildup (grayish or greenish spots on the teeth, usually most visible on the molars), you will need to start by having your veterinarian do a dental scaling to clean the surfaces above and below the gumline. For routine maintenance at home, there are several toothbrushes on the market that can work remarkably well. Feline toothbrushes come in either the standard bristle toothbrush or, as I prefer, a finger toothbrush. The finger toothbrush is a soft latex-type material which fits over your finger much like a thimble. The bristles are made of the same soft latex material rather than bristle.

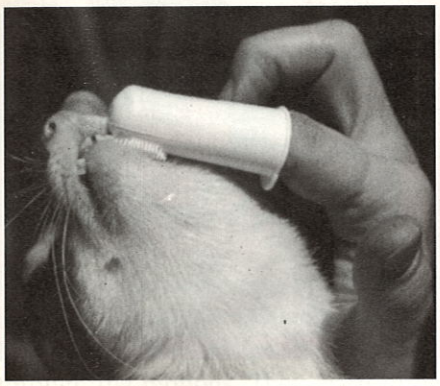
If you have never brushed your ferret's teeth, you may need to gradually get him used to having his mouth manipulated. Start by gently massaging his cheeks and mouth with your finger. Over the course of several days, work up to rubbing his teeth and gums with your finger. When he seems to tolerate this well, you can let him taste the toothpaste (see below) and begin to introduce him to the toothbrush. You will probably want to scruff your ferret or have someone else hold him. Remember to be patient — this is a new experience for your ferret.

Using the toothbrush or finger toothbrush and a feline toothpaste (ferrets seem to prefer malt flavor) gently massage the gums and the canine teeth. You will notice that the buildup of treats and soft food items cleans off very easily. The toothpaste is edible so there is no need for rinsing. Never use human toothpaste or baking soda on any pet's teeth, it can be harmful to them.

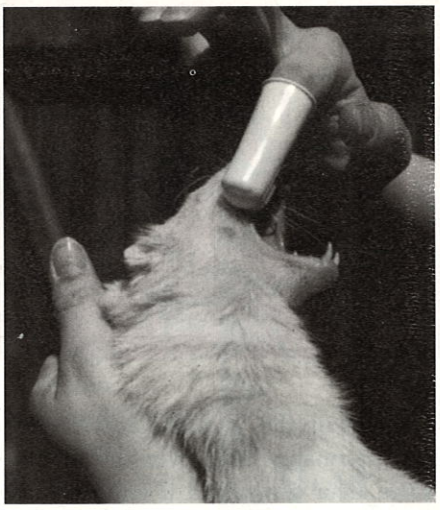
It is also advised to work back towards the molars to help reduce the tartar buildup in the areas that the tongue does not reach. This will reduce the need for frequent vet tooth cleanings. Crunchy food (kibbled food) is recommended to help keep teeth clean, but it is not enough. It should be understood that a vet tooth cleaning may be required for scaling the tartar off your ferret's teeth about every one to two years for optimum dental health. How often your ferret needs a veterinary tooth scaling will vary according to your ferret's diet. Ferrets who eat soft foods and treats will require more frequent dental cleanings.

All ferret owners should consider adding occasional tooth cleaning to their ferret's routine maintenance for a longer and healthier life.

Introduce your ferret to the toothbrush. HELLO TOOTHBRUSH!

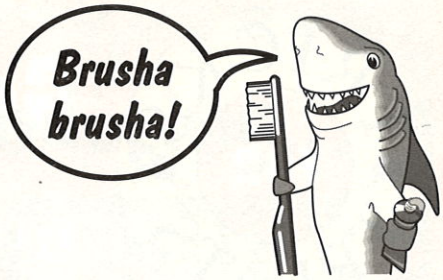


Brusha brusha brusha!
Note that scruffing your ferret to get a yawn will make it easier to reach the back teeth



Alicia Drakiotes (pictured here with Cloudburst) is the founder of the Ferret Wise Rescue. The shelter was incorporated in 1995 as the Ferret Wise Rescue & Rehabilitation Shelter in 1995. The shelter is non-profit and specializes in emergency rescue and critical care of ferrets. Alicia operates the shelter and is a veterinary technician for it.

Ferret Wise Rescue and Rehabilitation Shelter, PO Box 561, Marlborough, NH 03455. (603) 876-4975.



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TRICKS FOR TREATS

Get Your Kix!

by Cheryl Geodeke

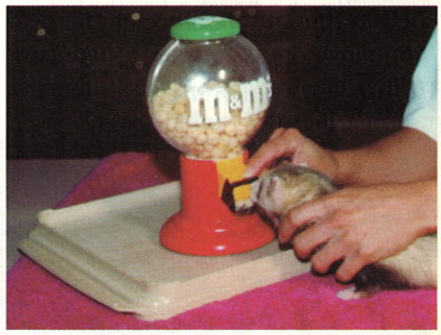
Before Ferret Gallery was established as a rescue, we had been working with a woman who was rescuing ferrets. The woman brought Hannah to the house, and immediately I had to have her. She was really sweet, and she was unusual because she had red eyes. We could see she was very, very smart. That was about three years ago. She was our third or fourth ferret.

Hannah's Best Trick

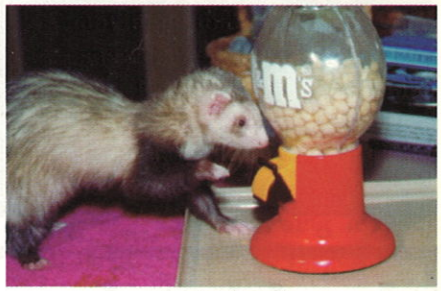
We've taken an M&M's candy dispenser, which has a lever on it, and we've replaced the M&M's with Kix cereal. When you pull the lever down, it opens up the "mouth," and Kix pop out. Hannah will go over and pull the little lever down and it will dispense Kix. She knows that if she wants her Kix, she has to pull the lever.

Why Hannah?

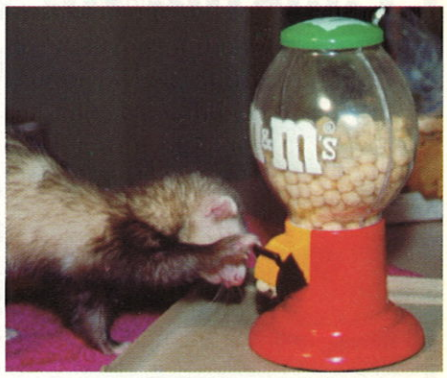
Hannah's really smart and when she likes her food, she's very determined. Hannah adores tomatoes, and when we're having tacos we have to almost hide from her because she'll do anything to get to that tomato. So she's real determined. I knew that if she liked her Kix that much, she would probably be determined to learn how to get them out of the



Look! A treat machine!



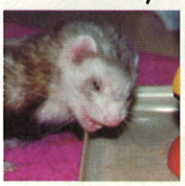
Reach! Reach!



Pull with all your might!

A treat! Hurray!

Get it!Get it!



Crunch! Crunch!

Any more in there?

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machine. I did try a couple of other ferrets but they didn't have a clue. Hannah learned it. I think it took me one evening to teach her how to do it. She picked it up immediately. Actually, I'm not sure the other ferrets aren't so smart because they just kind of hang out next to the Kix machine waiting for Hannah to do all the work and they get to eat too.

The Method

I taught Hannah pretty much how I would teach a dog a trick. You show them what the reward is. You show them how to get the reward. Then you go through the motions. They learn through repetition. Of course, each time Hannah did it, she got a reward. The trick itself is kind of good because it isn't like shaking hands and then getting a reward — the reward is actually the point of the trick. That helped. Also her sheer determination to have that Kix cereal pretty much did it.

The Steps

I filled the dispenser with Kix. Then I used the little lever to open the "mouth" so Hannah could see and smell the Kix. I showed her what was in there and where the Kix come out. I showed her how to open the "mouth" by pushing the lever myself. Then I took her paw and used it to pull down the lever. I let one Kix drop out, and she would eat it. I think I put her paw on the lever and let a Kix fall out about 6 or 7 times, then I let her try it. She'd sniff and she'd kind of pull on different things. After a while she learned where the lever was. In the beginning she wasn't pulling quite hard enough and every once in a while the mouth would get stuck, so we had to loosen up the spring just a little bit. Once we did that it was much easier. But it doesn't fall open, you have to pull it down. She definitely has to use her paw to pull it. She can't even stick her nose or paw in there to try to get it to open, she has to use the lever. The spring is tight enough so that as soon as the lever is released the mouth shuts. But once we loosened the spring, Hannah pulled it right down. Once she realized how the Kix come out, she does it pretty much right away now.

The first time she did her trick in public was at a show in South Carolina, and it took her a minute and a half. She was disqualified. But we had a TV camera and bright lights on her, so she was nervous. Here at home, we put the dispenser on a tray, so she knows the dispenser is in the tray and it's familiar to her. Now we take the tray with us, and she has no problem doing the trick. We even made a tape of it and sent it to David Letterman for stupid pet tricks and we're just waiting for Dave to give us a call.

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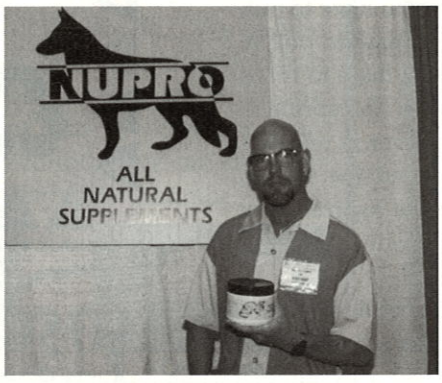

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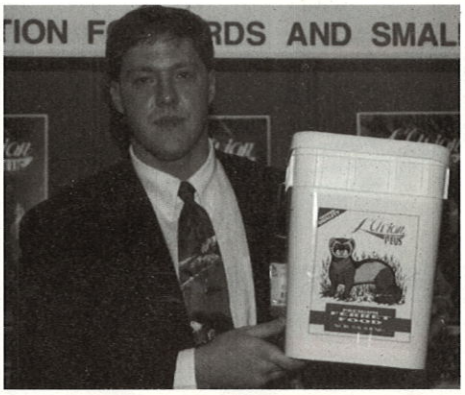

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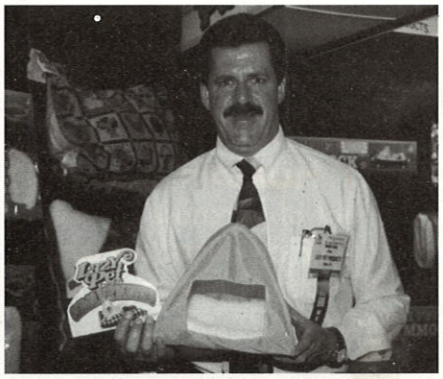

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Lost to silly kisses with whiskers up your nose
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Who relish baffling
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by Sukie Crandall
Basking Ridge, NJ

Inspiration on four feet — Ruffle.

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along my ribs: warm ferret.
Gift: another day.

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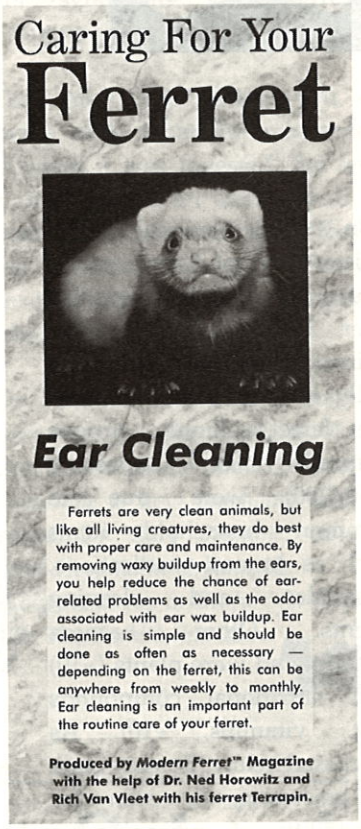
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Produced by Modern Ferret™ Magazine with the help of Dr. Ned Horowitz and Rich Van Vleet with his ferret Terrapin.

This full-color brochure was produced by *Modern Ferret*. It is based on our Ear Cleaning article in issue #6. We are giving it away for free to help ferret owners take better care of their pets.

If you would like a copy for yourself, please send a self-addressed stamped envelope #10 (business size) with your request to:

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This brochure is part of *Modern Ferret*'s ongoing efforts to educate the ferret-owning public. We hope that response to this brochure will be very strong and enable us to produce other free educational literature.

Toxicological Problems in the Ferret

The Doctor Is In™ - Installment #7

By Donna L. Juhl, D.V.M.

In 1994 the National Animal Poison Control Center at the University of Illinois handled over 25,000 calls regarding animal exposures to potentially toxic materials. Due to the ferret's highly curious nature, most exposures (160/200) were due to common household items such as human medications, pesticides, and cleaning agents. Other hazards encountered were plants (~10) and nutritional compounds (e.g., vitamins, ~10). As discussed below, in most cases of poisoning, or even the possibility of poisoning, a veterinarian should be consulted immediately.

The most common human medication exposure is with analgesics, which include aspirin, Tylenol (acetaminophen), and Advil (ibuprofen). Many times these pills have dropped on the floor, and the ferret swallows or chews them. These medications can cause serious, often life-threatening, problems depending on the amount ingested.

Clinical signs associated with aspirin toxicosis include increased respiratory rate, vomiting, increased body temperature, coma, seizures, and death. Acetaminophen can cause depression, vomiting, liver disease, and death. Ibuprofen is related to aspirin and both can cause stomach ulceration. In high doses, ibuprofen can also cause acute kidney failure. If there is a possibility that your ferret has ingested one of these compounds, you should consult your veterinarian immediately.

Pesticides can be divided into insecticides, rodenticides, and herbicides. The most frequent insecticidal exposures are flea products and ant killers. Generally, toxic problems with flea products are seen when they are used incorrectly or in excessive amounts. Pyrethrins are a common ingredient in flea products. Though normally safe, pyrethrin overdosage can cause salivation, tremors, vomiting, and seizures. Other common flea product ingredients include carbamates and organophosphates. These may also cause salivation, vomiting, diarrhea, and tremors. Again, early decontamination and treatment as prescribed by your veterinarian is essential.

Ant bait traps are products containing insecticides that ferrets may try to eat because they often contain very tasty materials. Fortunately, the ferret is usually unable to crack the metal or plastic container, thus ingestions are generally small amounts, producing no clinical signs.

Many rodenticides are anticoagulants (compounds that prevent the blood from clotting). Because most of these compounds are inhibitors of Vitamin K, ingestion of these products requires treatment with Vitamin K1 at prescription doses for 14–30 days, with the duration of treatment depending on the rodenticide. The ferret should be seen by a veterinarian within 24 hours of the exposure. Ferrets can be exposed to a variety of herbicides and fungicides. Even though a ferret is usually exposed to only a small amount, each case should be assessed by a veterinarian.

Cleaning agents in the house often lead to problems in the ferret. Many of these are cationic agents that can cause mucosal damage (i.e., damage to the lining of the gastrointestinal tract). The only sign some ferrets will show is loss of appetite; others may salivate and/or develop a fever. Secondary bacterial infections may also occur following the development of ulcers, and dehydration can develop if the ferret refuses to eat and drink. When first exposed, the ferret's mouth should be rinsed. This can be accomplished by making the ferret drink some milk. In most cases, attempts to cause the ferret to vomit

will cause more damage than good, as the caustic material traverses the relatively unprotected esophagus. Then the ferret should be monitored daily, checking its mouth for sores, redness, and excess salivation. If the ferret has no visible signs, but is not eating or is lethargic, the damage may have occurred in the esophagus. Medical treatment is necessary in the affected animal. Antibiotics are used to prevent secondary infections and gruels (such as "Duck Soup") are fed to prevent further mucosal damage.

The number of household products that ferrets can be exposed to is enormous. Clinical signs associated with these products can range from mild digestive upsets to life-threatening emergencies. A veterinarian should be contacted if any possible exposure has occurred.

House plants can cause a variety of clinical signs. Some cause mild mucosal irritation; others may lead to more severe gastrointestinal upsets, kidney damage, nervous system effects, or liver damage.

Vitamins can also cause toxic problems in the ferret. After calculating the dosage received, your veterinarian can assess the severity of an exposure.

The National Animal Poison Control Center at the University of Illinois is the only hotline for "poisonings" of animals in the United States. The hotline is available 24 hours a day, and each caller is able to talk to a staff veterinarian familiar with animal toxicoses. The Center can be reached at **1-800-548-2423**. The caller is charged $30.00 to a major credit card. An alternative is to call **1-900-680-0000**. The charge for this is $20.00 for the first 5 minutes and $2.95 for each additional minute, billed directly to your phone bill.

It is a good idea to have the following information ready if you ever need to call the Poison Control Center:

1. The name of the substance your ferret got into and the dosage, if any is given.
2. The weight of your ferret.
3. Any noticeable behavioral changes or symptoms your ferret is experiencing.

The more information you can provide as to what the substance is and when it was ingested, the faster you will receive an answer and the sooner treatment can be given to your ferret. Remember to stay calm and give clear information to the person on the other end of the phone.

Dr. Juhl has served as a volunteer veterinarian for the National Animal Poison Control Center at the University of Illinois. She is now practicing with her husband, Dr. Gary Brummet, at A&E Animal Hospital in Urbana, IL.

A big thank you to Dr. Juhl for filling in for Dr. Kupersmith this issue.

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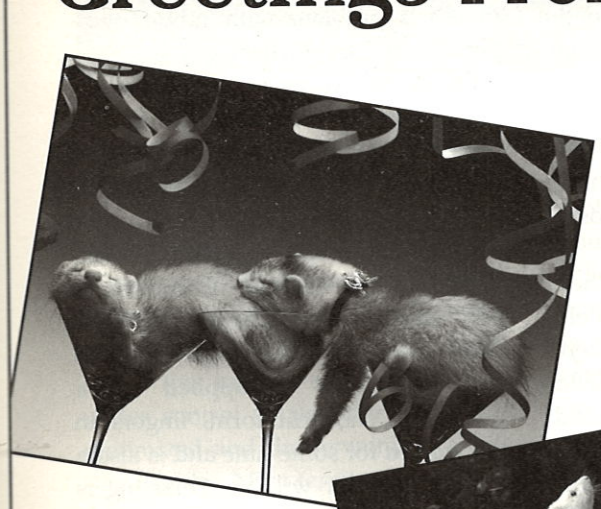

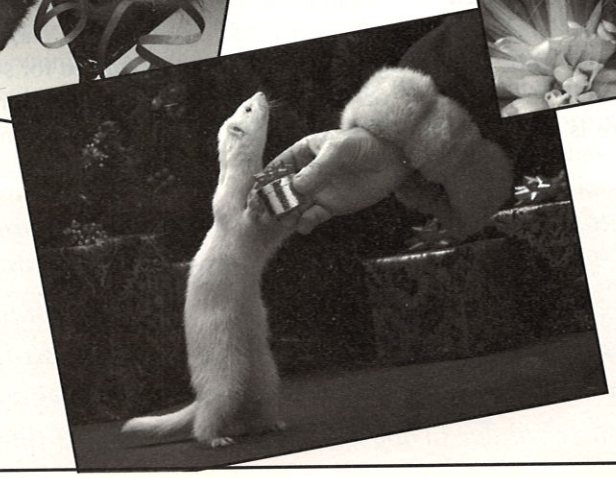

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WIDE WORLD OF FERRETS™

Ferreting in the U.K.

by Neal Espen Segal
with George Parker

I had the pleasure of visiting the United Kingdom for three months over the summer of 1995. Initially, I was going over to spend some time working as an architect, which I did. But as a ferret lover and an officer of New York's Big Apple Ferrets Inc., my duties also lie elsewhere.

Before I left, Susan Morrow (Treasurer of Big Apple Ferrets Inc.) and I had read a couple of articles about ferrets in the U.K. Through a series of phone calls, we finally located a chap by the name of George Parker [see *Modern Ferret* Vol. 1, No. 5]. He's the treasurer of the Essex Ferret Welfare Society, and also a ferreter (he hunts rabbits with ferrets). While I was over there, I was given a proper education on the how's and why's of ferreting.

Ferreting has been a popular pastime in the U.K. for centuries. Although not as common as it once was, it is still the most effective way of controlling a surprisingly destructive (yes, destructive!) varmint, the rabbit.

The wild rabbit's home is called a *bury* in some parts of the U.K. and a *warren* in others. Burys, or warrens, come in various sizes and the older, more established ones can cover as much as an acre, though most are much smaller. Basically, a warren is a system of small chambers connected by tunnels, with multiple exit holes in various places at the surface. Depending on the type of soil, the average large warren consists of about 60 to 100 holes. These systems can house hundreds of rabbits. A warren covering an acre would have hundreds of holes and would be impossible to ferret effectively.

Wild rabbits usually dig their warrens in the highest part of a field or on a bank. In England alone there are an estimated 35 million wild rabbits. They are located around farmers' crops and at night they come out and ravage *acres* of the crops. There is also an account of a warren located under the corner of a building that caused the building to actually start to cave in. So in come the ferrets. In several European countries, a ferreter is often called in to help when there's a problem with rabbit overpopulation [see sidebar pg. 41].

Of all the ways to control rabbit overpopulation, ferreting has always been the most humane and effective. One of the more common alternatives to ferreting, where rabbits are a real problem to crops, is gassing with cyanide. This method of control is very effective and kills all the occupants of the warren. However, the cyanide, which is applied in a powdered chemical form, lingers in the warren for some time and is also a danger to other wildlife. Ferreting is about control, not extermination. It is

Editor's Note: Ferreting (using ferrets to hunt rabbits) is illegal in the United States. ***Do not use your ferret to hunt rabbits!*** *Your ferret could be injured or killed, and you could get into serious trouble with the law. This article is intended to educate readers as to how human beings depend on ferrets as hunting companions (in a manner similar to dogs) in other countries and throughout history.*

Live outside the U.S.? Have ferrets?

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PO Box 338
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about management of the countryside. A rabbit population that has gotten too large can cause horrifying damage. In addition, a large population is prone to disease, and disease spreads rapidly through a densely populated warren. Ferreting actually crops the rabbits and keeps them under control so that the damage is minimized and the remaining rabbits stay healthy. Most ferreters care about the countryside and, believe it or not, like to see rabbits running about in it. Ferreting is also selective. As the rabbit is caught in the net, the ferreter can either kill it or release it. At the beginning and end of the season, particularly in the last few years when there have been very mild winters in the U.K., baby rabbits are caught in the nets. These are released. Also, the ferreter can choose to kill only old bucks (male rabbits), old does (female rabbits) or whatever, and release the younger, fitter animals.

Ferrets are a perfect companion for hunting rabbits in their warrens. The ferrets have a strong instinct to pursue rabbits, and they have no problems fitting through the tunnels to sniff out the rabbits. Also, they are usually in little danger of being injured by the rabbits. The ferreting procedure sounds quite simple, yet it has been refined over time to an art. Like other skills, ferreting needs to be learned from a person who knows what he is doing. Any skill looks easy in the hands of an experienced practitioner, but the novice finds out very soon that it is not easy. Even experienced ferreters are involved in a continual

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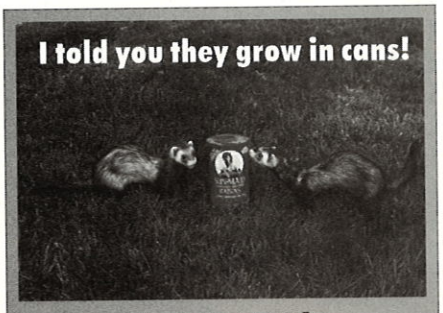

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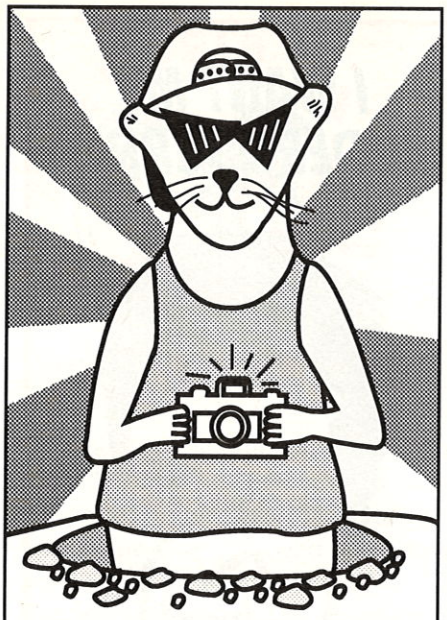

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learning process. Odd situations occur from time to time that have not occurred before. But the ferreter's experience of working his ferrets allows him to deal with each situation quickly and without panic, so he can avert a disaster. Nobody should even contemplate ferreting unless he knows what he is doing, as he is likely to cause injury and distress to the animals involved if he does.

The ferreter needs certain supplies for a day of ferreting: nets and stakes, a small box for the ferrets, the ferrets, electronic locator collars and locator (essentially a tiny homing device), a knife, a spade, and warm clothes. Before the hunt, everything must be inspected. The nets for holes and tangles, the locator for its ability to locate, and the ferrets for their health and overall condition. The locator collars are put onto the ferrets and are tested again. The ferrets are not treated like tools, they are treated with a tremendous amount of respect, and are handled consistently and with love. Everything is bundled appropriately and packed.

The ferrets are treated with a tremendous amount of respect.

Usually, the ferrets used are tiny jills (female ferrets). These are least likely to get stuck in the tunnels and are quite spunky little animals. The holes in the nets are also big enough for the jills to walk through, but small enough to trap the rabbits. There is no structured training involved. The ferrets are raised in a manner where they want to return to their owner.

The ferreter always gets permission from the landowner before ferreting the land. Although rabbits are classed as vermin in the U.K., they actually belong to the owner of the land, and taking them without permission involves a criminal offense of poaching, and possibly a civil offense of trespass. Therefore, the property owner should be consulted before a hunt. A warren is located, either by the hunter or by the landowner. The holes are staked out very carefully. The nets are laid out over each hole and staked into the ground with a single stake. When all of the holes (possibly dozens) are covered, the hunt begins. The ferrets by this point are very excited; they know exactly what they're in for. When they are raised for the purpose of hunting, ferrets love to hunt. The ferrets are slipped under the net and instantly disappear into the hole. Then the waiting begins.

The purpose in ferreting is to make the rabbit run out of the warren and into the net. A ferret killing or trapping a rabbit underground is not desirable, although it does happen from time to time. Any ferret that shows a preference for doing this is usually retired. Although uncommon, a rabbit may strike out in fear at the ferret, but this usually injures only the ferret's pride.

When the ferret is in the tunnels of the warren, the rabbits are very much aware of her before any encounter. Rabbits have heightened senses of both hearing and smell. Because of the rabbits' awareness, most of the work of netting up and other preparation of the field is done in total silence. Any walking on or around the warren is done softly so that the minimum of noise is heard underground. The warren acts like a sound box and any small noise above is amplified. Therefore, the rabbits can hear and smell the ferret as soon as she is entered; this is what makes them run and bolt. Ferrets also have an excellent sense of smell and can soon get on the trail of a rabbit by following its scent. A good ferret will work the warren systematically, quartering the area and working all the tunnels and passages in sequence, flushing and bolting the rabbits as she goes.

There is often a long wait before a

C'est La Vie

Ferreting is an alien concept to most Americans. But in other parts of the world, calling in a ferreter is about as commonplace as calling in a roofer. Take, for example, the gamekeepers at Charles de Gaulle Airport in Roissy, France (just outside Paris), who have been having a bit of a problem with those pesky rabbits.

An article in the New York Times (8/8/96) reports that as many as 50,000 rabbits live in the 5,000 acres of land that surround the airport's two primary runways. Concerns about potentially dangerous damage arise when the rabbits' warrens are too close to the runways. The ground becomes unstable, leading to erosion and, ultimately, collapse. The rabbits also chew on landing light cables.

To address the problem, the airport's gamekeepers naturally called in ferreters. Other options (chemical extermination or contraceptive sprays) are considered too risky. But despite the ferreters' — and ferrets' — best efforts (they caught 3,755 rabbits in the past year), still the rabbits are everywhere. Because no flights have been affected by the rabbits, the gamekeepers have chosen to live in peace with them, for now.

rabbit bolts. The rabbits have an advantage over the ferrets in that they know their own warren and all its tunnels and routes very well; the ferret is only following a scent. They can lead a ferret a merry dance underground, and inexperienced ferrets will often give up when this happens. When done successfully, the ferret encounters a rabbit, and the rabbit bolts through the tunnels and springs out of an exit. The nets are designed to more or less "bag" the rabbit as the net is pulled against the stake. The ferreter *quickly* snatches the rabbit by the back legs and "dispatches" it. The ferreter does this, in one action, by lifting the rabbit by the back legs, wrapping his hand around the back of the rabbit's neck, bending the head backward and quickly stretching the rabbit. The procedure takes less than a second, and the rabbit doesn't feel a thing. This is a *major* concern of the ferreter. If the ferret comes out of the hole, she is given a treat and then returns to the hunt.

On occasion, a ferret might kill a rabbit while still underground. The ferret will kill the rabbit by crushing the neck and will probably begin to dine on it. This is when the locator is used. The ferrets are all fitted with locator collars and their movements are tracked at all times. If a ferret has caught a rabbit underground, it is possible to tell almost immediately because the locator indicates that the ferret has stopped moving. The locator also gives an indication of the depth of the tunnel. There may also be sounds of a struggle. If this happens, the depth of the tunnel is found exactly with a probe, and the ferret and rabbit are dug out within a very short space of time. Rabbits trapped or killed underground are always dealt with as a matter of urgency and are never left until the end. After the ferret and rabbit are dug out, the ferret is not punished.

After all ferrets are accounted for and given treats, the dispatched rabbits are prepared to be taken home. (Some of you may find this a bit too crude, so please skip this paragraph if you're the squeamish type.) A slit is placed through the back of the rabbit's calf and its other back leg is stuck through this slit. That second leg is then slit and the back leg of a second rabbit is inserted. This procedure is continued until the rabbits form a manageable chain. They are then taken home and become dinner for everyone, especially the ferrets. Ferrets love to eat rabbit. The carcass is given whole, complete with fur, and the ferrets will consume the entire rabbit, with the possible exception of the feet. Sometimes, the ferreter guts the rabbits in the field (the entrails are buried), but mostly this is done after returning home. If a rabbit is gutted in the field, the liver, heart, kidneys, and sometimes the lungs may be given as a treat to the ferrets.

Since the rabbit is classified in law a vermin, there is no closed season for hunting it. Most ferreters operate a voluntary closed season during the months April to September because the rabbit is breeding during this time. Over the last few years the season has been shorter than previous years, and sometimes ferreting has not been able to commence until late October and has had to cease by the end of February, when nests of baby rabbits have been encountered.

Ferreting is illegal in the United States. If done improperly, it can be harmful to you and fatal for your ferret. The ferrets found in the United States have been bred away from their hunting instincts, so they are disadvantaged as hunters. *Please do not try to hunt with your ferrets.*

All field/hunting photos are used with permission, courtesy of the Essex Ferret Welfare Society, Essex, UK.

Neal Espen Segal is currently studying architecture at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY. He is also President of Big Apple Ferrets Inc.

George Parker is Treasurer of the Essex Ferret Welfare Society in Essex, UK. The Society rescues and places homeless ferrets. George is also an experienced ferreter.

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Contests!

Pink Noses™ PHOTO CONTEST

Your Ferret Famous

Do you have a photogenic ferret? Your ferret's photo could be on the next *Modern Ferret* trading card (or here in the magazine)! Here's how:

*All ferrets, regardless of nose color, are eligible.

*Pick out your favorite glossy finish photo(s).

*Write the following information for each photo. Your name, address, phone number, and your ferret's name. Please be careful to not damage your photo - we've had problems with ink bleeding through photos or rubbing off onto other photos.

*If there's something special about your ferret you'd like to mention, please do so!

*We regret that due to the sheer volume of photos we receive, we will no longer be able to return photos.

*Any of your photos that are published become eligible to be on trading cards or other *Modern Ferret* productions.

*By entering the contest, you grant permission to *Modern Ferret* to use the photos. Credit to the photographer is, of course, given.

SPONSORED BY:

Four Paws® Products Ltd.

FAN ART ART CONTEST

Rembrandt and Picasso may have fame, but YOU can get something they can't get — a $25 gift certificate to Discount Master! (And some fame in the ferret community.)

Break out the pencils, pens, paint, crayons, whatever! Please send us your original black and white or color pieces of ferret artwork. Any type of artwork is acceptable, as long as it features ferrets.

Contest entry grants *Modern Ferret* publication rights to the artwork. We will, unfortunately, not be able to return art submissions. If you have a special case/problem, please call us.

Please ship your art VERY carefully! Mail can sometimes be kinda' rough.

We will be running the Fan Art section in every issue of *Modern Ferret*, so keep sending in art! We'll run as many pieces as we can and the best submission from each issue will receive a $25 gift certificate from Discount Master Animal Care Catalog.

SPONSORED BY:

DISCOUNT MASTER ANIMAL CARE CATALOG

Send all contest entries to:

Modern Ferret
attn: _____ Contest
PO BOX 338
Massapequa Park NY 11762

FOR MODERN FERRET SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION SEE THE BACK INSIDE COVER

FUNNY FERRET TRICKS

Humor Contest

Ferrets are pretty goofy creatures! Now we'd like to celebrate the ferret's comic nature with a humor contest. What lengths does your ferret go to for a treat? What funny predicaments has your ferret gotten into? You can show us by sending a photo or short story. We'll try to run as many as space permits.

*The top 5 entries received will win a Ferretude T-shirt and the best entry received will also get a $25 value of Eight in One ferret products which includes new ferret canned treats and ferret canned diet.

*Please make sure you provide the following information: Your name, address, phone number, and your ferret's name.

*We regret that due to the sheer volume of entries we receive, we will not be able to return entries.

*By entering the contest, you grant permission to *Modern Ferret* to use your submission in the magazine or related materials. In any usage, credit to the submittor will be given.

SPONSORED BY:

8 in 1 Pet Products

MODERN FERRET'S CONTESTS ARE SPONSORED BY OUR REGULAR ADVERTISERS - PLEASE SHOW THEM YOUR SUPPORT!

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Display boxes are
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Advertising space is extremely limited, and *Modern Ferret* reserves the right to refuse any advertising it deems improper or unfit.

Modern Ferret is available in more pet stores and book stores every day. You can help us out and your fellow ferret owners by encouraging your favorite store to carry more copies of *Modern Ferret*. That way more people will be able to find it. Thank you!

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Well, actually it costs a stamp. Just send us a self-addressed stamped envelope and we'll fill it with some of the extra promotional stuff we have lying about and drop it back in the mail. This is stuff like trading cards, tail measurers, table tents, etc. Please allow us some time to stuff.

Send your SASE to:
Modern Ferret
attn SASE for free stuff
PO Box 338
Massapequa Park NY 11762

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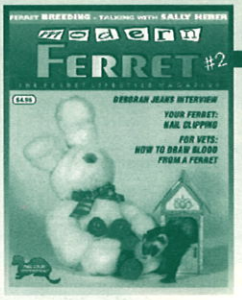
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Copies of Issues # 4, 5, and 6 are still available. Send $5.95 for each issue you want to: Modern Ferret - PO Box 338 - Massapequa Park, N.Y. 11762

Ferret Events Calendar

This listing is updated as new/more complete information is received.

SEPTEMBER 1996

14 — Ohio Ferret Fanciers Association show; sanctioned by North American Ferret Association (NAFA). Location: Ohio. For information: 216-753-6235. POSTPONED.

14 — Big Apple Ferrets championship show, "Fiesta '96"; sanctioned by American Ferret Association (AFA). Location: White Plains Hotel, White Plains, NY. For information: BAF, PO Box 4022, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163 or 212-388-8652 (general information). For ferret registration only: 703-777-2112.

21 — Baltimore Ferret Club championship show, "Ferret Freedom Fiesta." Location: Annapolis Armory, Annapolis, MD. For information: 410-448-1281.

28 — Ferret Association of Rhode Island show, "FARI Frolic." Location: North Kingstown Community Center, Beach St., North Kingstown, RI. For information: 401-294-6309 or 401-423-2460.

OCTOBER 1996

5 — Legion of Superferrets (LOS) National show, "Ferret Fiasco"; sanctioned by League of Independent Ferret Enthusiasts (LIFE). Location: Croydon, PA. For information: 215-946-2747 or 215-781-9044 or fax 215-946-1291.

5–6 — Vicki Clark's Exotics & Family Pet Showcase Exposition. Location: Garden State Park Racetrack, Cherry Hill, NJ. For information: 215-721-7199.

12 — Georgia Domestic Ferret Association show; sanctioned by League of Independent Ferret Enthusiasts (LIFE). Location: Atlanta, GA. For information: 404-442-5917.

19 — Greater Chicago Ferret Association show, "The Greatest Ferret Show on Earth #8." Location: DuPage County Fairgrounds, Wheaton, IL. For information: 708-442-8650 (please note new phone number).

26 — Loudoun Area Ferret Fanciers (LAFF) championship show & fun match, "Phantom Ferrets On Parade." Location: Capitol Expo Center, Chantilly, VA. For information: 703-777-2112.

NOVEMBER 1996

2 — Susquehanna Valley Ferret Club championship show; sanctioned by League of Independent Ferret Enthusiasts (LIFE). Location: Pennsylvania. For information: 717-540-1078.

9 — Great Lakes Ferret Association show, "Ferret Renaissance '96." Location: Holiday Inn West, ~~Rancine,~~ Lansing MI. For information: 313-287-4572.
03 Off 96 W W. Saginaw St.

9 — Ferret Association of Connecticut show. Location: Connecticut. For information: 203-247-1275.

23 — American Ferret Association championship show, "Fall Harvest Expo"; sanctioned by the American Ferret Association (AFA). Location: National Guard Armory, Frederick, MD. For information: 1-888-Ferret-1.

30–Dec. 1 — Vicki Clark's Exotics & Family Pet Showcase Exposition. Location: Fort Washington Expo Center, Fort Washington, PA. For information: 215-721-7199.

MARCH 1997

1 — American Ferret Association championship show, "Ferret Expo '97"; sanctioned by the American Ferret Association (AFA). Location: New Carrollton Ramada, New Carrollton, MD. For information: 1-888-Ferret-1.

22 — Loudoun Area Ferret Fanciers (LAFF) championship show & fun match, "Ferrets On Parade '97." Location: Capitol Expo Center, Chantilly, VA. For information: 703-777-2112.

If your club is having a show or fun match, you must get the information to *Modern Ferret* as far in advance as possible. We can no longer list shows for which we do not received information. When submitting information for a show listing, please include the following:

1. Date. 2. Club/show sponsor (e.g., Anytown Ferret Club). 3. Show title, if any (e.g., "Ferret Show #1"). 4. Sanctioning body, if any (e.g., LIFE, NAFA, AFA, FURO). 5. Place of show (city, state, hall if known). 6. Contact (can be any or all: phone/fax/address/e-mail).

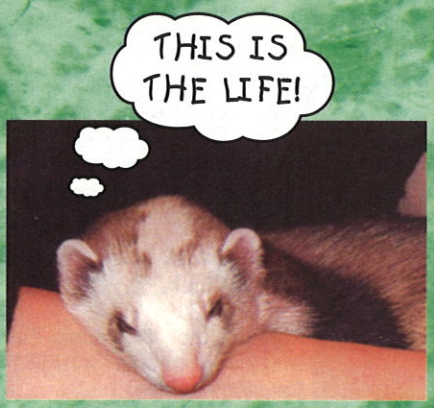
PRODUCTION NOTES:
This issue was composed using CorelDRAW! 5.0 on a 486/66 which is extremely underpowered for the task. Scans for the interior were a combination of AGFA Arcus II scans and HP Scanjet II CX. Would somebody please donate a good scanner? We'd really appreciate it! While you're at it, some new computers would be nice. Something better, stronger, faster...

PRODUCTION NOTES:
This issue's music:
The Who, The Zombies, Green Day (seems to always be Green Day in this list), and Elvis Costello.
This issue's TV:
Star Trek: Next Generation, Star Trek: Deep Space Nine, Seinfeld, Cheers, Murphy Brown, The Dick Van Dyke Show, Bob Newhart, Phyllis, Taxi, and I Love Lucy.

PRODUCTION NOTES:
Check out this issue's Pink Noses pages and Ralph's reviews for the difference the Arcus II makes. Too bad we were using someone else's. Our ZIP drive is incredibly useful! We love the Canon Rebel camera. We really wish that our cable company would pick up the TV Land channel — without TV we'd have no culture at all and we wouldn't laugh enough.

Ralph's Reviews IN COLOR

featuring: RALPH THE INSPECTOR



Marble Small Pet Food Dish
CALANPRO (California Animal Products)
6450 Dehesa Rd.
El Cajon, CA 92019
619-445-0668

Any dish can hold food, but this marble dish is also attractive and elegant. Because it is heavy, marble is an excellent choice for a ferret food dish. The heavy weight combined with a non-tip type design make this dish tough to tip over (not that we're implying that any ferrets dump their food dishes — Heavens no!). Heavier than ordinary crockery and much more sophisticated. Labeled for ferrets and other small animals. Characteristic marble colors. Ask your retailer to contact CALANPRO to get this marble dish.

Ralph's Review: "This bowl is fit for a king! And I am of course like a king and deserve to eat crunchies from such an opulent bowl. It stays put when I'm nudging the crunchies up the side of the bowl into my mouth. Ahhh, it's good to be the king."

Sable Sheen Shampoo
Sheppard & Greene Pet Products, Inc.
PO Box 330787
Miami, FL 33233-0787
800-851-6661

An all-natural tearless shampoo-and-conditioner formula for ferrets, Sable Sheen is appropriate for ferrets of any color. What makes this shampoo different from other ferret shampoos is that it has a vanilla fragrance. It was designed to help minimize the musky ferret aroma by complementing it with another earthy smell, instead of covering it up with floral or fruit fragrance. Ferrets smell delicious! Sable Sheen is gentle and has conditioners so your ferret's skin doesn't become dry. Ask your retailer to contact Sheppard and Greene to get this shampoo.

Ralph's Review: "Just when I get myself smelling 'just right,' Mom and Dad come and dunk me in the sink and rub a bunch of bubbly stuff on me. As bubbly stuff goes, this is pretty good. It makes my fur soft and shiny and it doesn't make me itchy. I just wish I didn't have to get wet to take a bath."

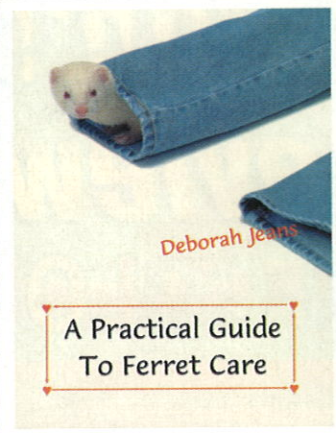
I'm calling my agent! My contract didn't have any BATHS in it !!!
Sheppard & Greene
Sable Sheen
Tearless Ferret Shampoo and Conditioner

You saw it here in Modern Ferret!

NEW!

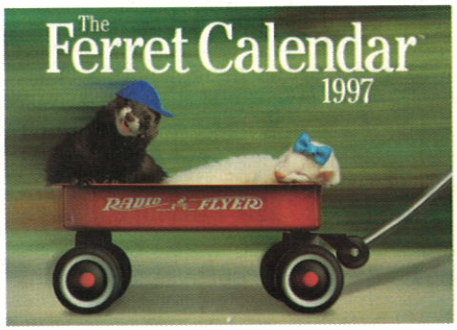
The Cat Fish™

Kohnpet Inc., 8C Music Fair Rd., Owings Mills, MD 21117 — phone: 410-581-7015 or 800-487-3574 (retailer inquiries)
This toy may have been designed with cats in mind, but little fuzzies like it too. A fishing reel and rod with a mouse dangling on the end. Great fun for you and your ferret. Available at pet stores. Have your retailer call his distributor or the manufacturer.



A Practical Guide To Ferret Care
by Deborah Jeans

Ferrets Inc., PO Box 450099, Miami, FL 33245 — phone: (for orders) 800-988-0988 or 305-856-8566
The second edition of the well-known and loved book by author/ferret owner Deborah Jeans. The book has updated information (including how to deal with "Green Slime" diarrhea), as well as added chapters such as remembering a ferret who has died. Tommy Ferret and his adorable new friend, Twinkle, help explain it all. Soft cover; 8.5" x 11"; 176 pages.

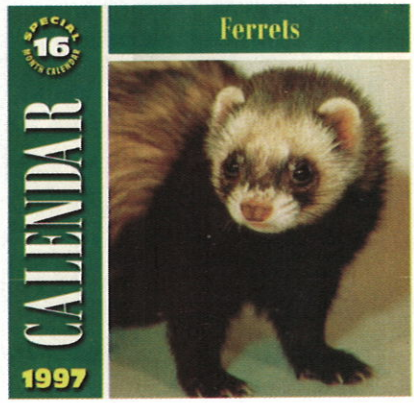


The Ferret Calendar™/The Ferret Calendar Greeting Cards

The Ferret Calendar, PO Box 7161, Redwood City, CA 94063 — phone: 415-851-5775
The 1997 edition of The Ferret Calendar is now available. As in previous years, the calendar features creative and fun photographs of our most precious pets. Both the calendar and the cards have information about ferrets in the form of "Ferret Facts & Ferret Fictions." Also new from The Ferret Calendar — ferret greeting cards. There are several different card styles, some with photos from previous years' calendars. Great for all sorts of gift-giving. Cards are blank inside and are available in boxes of 10.

QuickSand™ Sifting System

Smart Inventions, Inc. — phone: 1-800-917-5577
A litterbox that's easy to clean and helps minimize mess. Instead of scooping waste, you sift it out. The QuickSand Sifting System includes three sifting trays and, for a limited time, a splash guard. The pieces fit together to create a box. Simple instructions. When used with splash guard, suitable for larger, adult ferrets; without splash guard, suitable for all.



Ferrets 1997 Calendar

Published by Pet Prints, Inc.; available through FerretWare — phone: 800-FerretW
This 16-month calendar (September 1996 – December 1997) is full of cute ferret photos by various photographers. Sables, cinnamons, silvers — something for everyone. Can also be used to keep track of important dates.

Weasel Dome Tent

Wilco of Boulder, 2749 Glenwood Ct., Suite 10, Boulder, CO 80304 — phone: 303-440-6745
The Weasel Dome Tent is hand-made of rip-stop nylon. Three support rods keep the tent from collapsing — even with the most rambunctious ferrets inside. Solid construction makes the tent durable. Hand washable. Available at pet stores. Have your retailer call his distributor or the manufacturer.

Wedding Weasels

Congratulations To
Tommy and Tami
Marsden
Married July 4, 1996

This is what happens when you have Modern Ferret take your wedding pictures...

Tommy and Tami with their ferrets Misty, Vito, Nikita, Gizmo, and Ernie.

Fortunately, Tami is a good sport about things like her picture on page 1. Right?... I hope so!
- Eric

The wedding invitation for Tim and Debra Davis October 28, 1995.

(Mary's sister) Kristin & Andrew Carroll (married June 8, 1996) along with Knuks.

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The Mystery of the Golden Sock and the Great Raisin War

Story by Marilyn Hendricks **Illustrations by Linda Ozelis**

Just southwest of the state of REM lies the tiny state of Apnea, a little farther west and you arrive at the slightly larger State of Bliss. Ask any of your ferrets, they have all heard of it and many have actually been there.

Long ago, before hammocks, leashes, and other such nonsensical conveniences, things were a bit different in Ferretdom. They were more rugged, with a sense of danger lurking somewhere just under the surface.

One of the best things about the State of Bliss at this time was that the Princess Sweet Pea and her extended family governed the state. Everyone loved the Princess and her handsome brother, Prince Rowdy. Their cousin Dook Dusty was also a favorite in Bliss. The Dook was madly in love with the beautiful Miss Maggie Mae, a most proper young lady who always wore white gloves. He accidentally called her "freckle-beak" when he was just teasing one day, and now she wouldn't pay him even the slightest morsel of attention.

In those days, everyone — even the royal families — had great responsibilities (they didn't just loll about on their keesters all day drinking 'Tone and getting into mischief). The Pea Princess and Miss Maggie had quite a business going. They had started as a demolition team, but both had grown tired of this, and now they were into digging homes and tunnels. Prince Rowdy became a silent partner: he was in charge of "testing" each home. He would move in just behind the girls to see if the new place was fit to sleep in. Dook Dusty took up an interest in this dirty work, and well, someone had to do it! Dusty and Rowdy took their testing very seriously, keeping up a grueling pace often the entire day.

One day, while digging the southeast wall of a one-bedroom, nine-bathroom rambler, the Princess of the Pea literally stumbled onto a tiny object. Upon closer inspection, the object looked to be a small golden sock. It was so marvelous and stunning, the Pea jumped and twirled, chirping and chuckling for the sheer joy of this mysterious find. Maggie Mae nearly went into orbit, and it was some time before the two could calm down enough to put things into focus. They realized that they had a terrible problem on their hands. This discovery could only be compared with the Great Raisin Fiasco some years back when the late King Snuffer (Princess Pea's grandpa) stumbled upon a huge amount of sweet sun-dried grapes. The Fiasco in turn escalated into The Great Raisin War. After much fighting, raisins are now under very strict control. The State of Bliss had

nearly been torn asunder by this episode. Entire families parted over a single raisin. Mothers left babies in the streets, and chaos ruled. Princess Sweet Pea shuddered at the thought. Maggie was too young to remember much of the War, so she thought the golden sock was a treasure beyond compare.

Stashing the sock carefully in a corner, the two girls set about making a plan. They decided to disguise the sock to look like a dirt ball so they could smuggle it out of the hole. They had to hurry, since Rowdy and Dusty would arrive any minute. Getting past those two was fairly easy — the were both yawning and fell flat asleep the second they arrived. They didn't even punch in their time cards.

Princess Sweet Pea and Miss Maggie Mae knew the person to consult about the golden sock was Cinderella (everyone called her "Cindy"), who was rumored to be the great, great granddaughter of the real Cinderella. Their family tree had grown so fuzzy that no one really knew for sure.

Cindy was very old and very wise, and everyone trusted her thinking in even the trickiest matters. Long ago, she had devised a spout-like contraption so ferrets wouldn't have to waste time opening lids on 'Tone bottles. This proved to be a great time-saver for working mothers.

Cindy's eyes grew large as saucers when she saw the golden sock. She seemed to acquire a sad, dreamy gaze — as though she was seeing beyond and far-off things. "I haven't thought about this sock in years," she said. "It was made for King Snuffer by his little daughter for his birthday. It had been stolen by a nasty troupe of entertainers called The Prancing Weasels that had performed at the King's birthday party. The theft had been a scandalous affair, with rewards offered and rumors flying. But the King's golden sock had vanished, never to be seen again. Until today ..."

* * *

Now, if you happen to have ferrets who can empty your sock drawer in a matter of seconds, they are very probably descendants of the very bad, sock-stealing, Prancing Weasels. And if they chirp and dance at the very sight of a single raisin, it is a dance done in tribute to the memory of those who served in The Great Raisin War.

Marilyn Hendricks is from Bellingham, WA. All the ferrets mentioned in the story are (or were) her ferrets. Thanks, Marilyn & ferrets, for sending us your tale!

A HUGE Thank You to Linda Ozelis for providing the wonderful illustrations.

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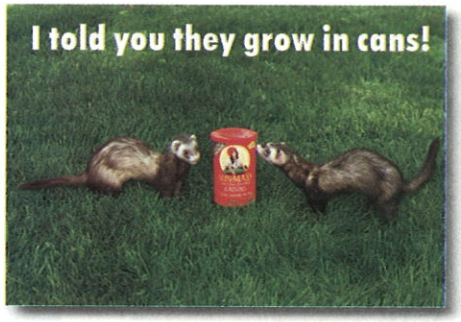

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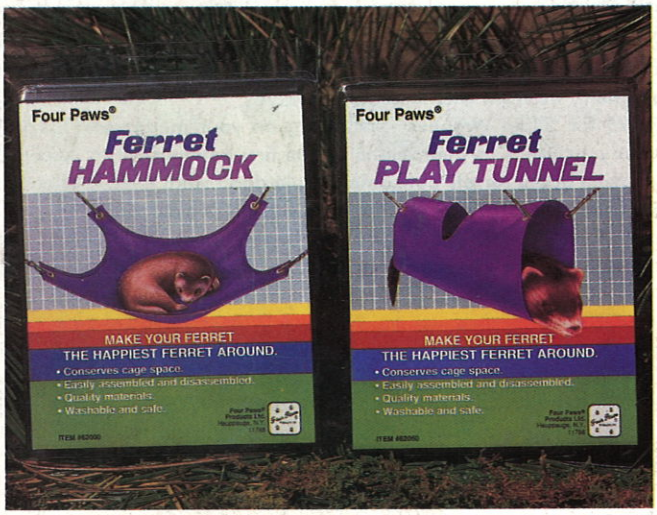

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